

# City of Saint John Growth Committee - Open Session AGENDA

## Tuesday, April 13, 2021 11:30 am

## Meeting Conducted by Electronic Participation

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1.	Call to	o Order	
	1.1.	Approval of Minutes - March 16, 2021	1 - 3
	1.2.	Growing in Saint John - ConnexionWorks - Heather Acker	
	1.3.	Uptown Parking	
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	1.6.	Municipal ENCORE Program - Open Streets Update	162 - 167
	1.7.	Municipal ENCORE Program - Spotlight Arts Creative Community Economy Initiative	168 - 267
	1.8.	Development Activity Update (Verbal)	
	1.9.	Growth Committee in Review - Member's Comments	



## The City of Saint John

## MINUTES - OPEN SESSION GROWTH COMMITTEE MEETING MARCH 16, 2021 AT 12:15 P.M. MEETING CONDUCTED BY ELECTRONIC PARTICIPATION

Present: Mayor D. Darling

Deputy Mayor McAlary Councillor J. MacKenzie Councillor D. Hickey Councillor B. Armstrong

Absent: Councillor R. Strowbridge

Also

Present: City Manager J. Collin

Commissioner Growth and Community Services J. Hamilton Director Growth and Community Planning P. Ouellette Director Permitting and Development A. Poffenroth

Growth Manager D. Dobbelsteyn

General Manager Parking and Transit Commission M. Dionne

Deputy Commissioner Administrative Services I. Fogan

Communications Officer N. Moar Communications Officer N. Logan

Manager Strategic Communications L. Caissie

Deputy Building Inspector P. Bentley

Growth Coordinator G. Cutler

Planner M. Reade

Manager Community Planning J. Kirchner

Manager Customer Service & Operations C. Smith

Administrative Officer R. Evans

Technical Services Engineer C. McKiel

Manager Vacant Building Program B. Purinton Population Growth Officer J. Waldschutz

Administrative Assistant K. Tibbits

## 1. Meeting Called to Order

Mayor Darling called the Growth Committee open session meeting to order.

## 1.1 Approval of Minutes – February 16, 2021

Moved by Deputy Mayor McAlary, seconded by Councillor MacKenzie: RESOLVED that the minutes of February 16, 2021 be approved.

MOTION CARRIED.

## 1.2 <u>Growing in Saint John Series – Hebatalla Mohamed, Women's Zone</u>

(Ms. Hebatalla Mohamed joined the meeting electronically)

Growth Committee Meeting Open Session March 16, 2021

The Growing in Saint John series shares success stories in the City and provides an opportunity to profile local businesses, leaders, newcomers, investors, and entrepreneurs. Mr. Dobbelsteyn introduced Hebatalla Mohamed, owner/moderator of Women's Zone Social Club.

Ms. Mohamed is an immigrant entrepreneur originally from Egypt who discussed her journey, challenges and accomplishments with respect to settling into the community and the establishment of her small business in Saint John.

Moved by Deputy Mayor McAlary, seconded by Councillor MacKenzie: RESOLVED that the Growing in Saint John Series, presentation by Hebatalla Mohamed, Women's Zone Social Club, be received for information.

MOTION CARRIED.

(Ms. Mohamed withdrew from the meeting)

## 1.3 <u>Strategic Plan Update</u>

Mr. Fogan reviewed the submitted presentation entitled "10-Year Strategic Plan" for the City of Saint John. The strategic plan outlines a strategy and direction to allow for better decision making and allocation of resources that align with the Community's vision. It implements other existing plans such as Plan SJ, Play SJ and Move SJ and will also guide the development of new future plans and policies. It supports adherence to the City's long-term financial plan and will ensure alignment with Council's priorities.

Moved by Deputy Mayor McAlary, seconded by Councillor Hickey: RESOLVED that the Strategic Plan Update, be received for information.

MOTION CARRIED.

### 1.4 <u>Dangerous and Vacant Building Update</u>

Mr. Purinton provided an update on the dangerous and vacant building program. Two new processes are being implemented into the program in 2021 – a procedure for late-stage development proposals and the developer notification list. Both processes will allow staff to address cases more effectively and see a higher percentage of vacant properties redeveloped.

### <u>Late-stage development proposals:</u>

As a result of the improved quality of vacant properties on the list there has been an increase in the number of development proposals made on buildings that have been recommended for demolition. When extensions are unsuccessful, it results in the building remaining a public safety hazard. Under the new process the requirements for an extension will ensure that developers are capable of and committed to redevelopment. Staff will evaluate the proposals and determine if the proposal warrants an extension. A deposit will be required from the developer and returned upon completion of the project.

## **Developer Notification List:**

An email list of developers interested in redevelopment of vacant buildings will be used to connect the owners of a vacant building to developers. Developers will be notified of redevelopment opportunities when they become available.

Moved by Councillor McKenzie, seconded by Councillor Hickey: RESOLVED that the submitted report Dangerous and Vacant Building Program update be received for information. Growth Committee Meeting Open Session March 16, 2021

### MOTION CARRIED.

## 1.5 Growth 2021 Work Plan

Mr. Ouellette reviewed the 2021 Growth Work Plan which sets priorities, monitors and evaluates successes and areas to be improved upon, and identifies projects for the upcoming year. There are a number of growth projects, led not only by Growth & Community Services, but with community partners as well. The city cannot achieve all growth-related objectives by itself. It requires the expertise and support of a variety of community groups. Key performance indicators have not yet been developed; it will be developed and aligned with the upcoming performance measurement program.

Moved by Deputy Mayor McAlary, seconded by Councillor Hickey: RESOLVED that the Growth 2021 Work Plan be received for information.

MOTION CARRIED.

## 1.6 <u>Development Activity Update (Verbal)</u>

Ms. Poffenroth provided an update on development activity. There are several major large-scale projects underway, including the Ethos Ridge project, a large-scale residential project at 300 Sydney Street, and a townhouse development at 439 Prince Street West. There has been very strong development activity and growth throughout the city. To date, there has been 87 building permits issued, with a value of over \$8M. Computer challenges continue to impact turnaround times and the Growth & Community Services team continue to work through these issues, to be prepared for the busy construction season ahead.

Moved by Councillor Hickey, seconded by Councillor MacKenzie: RESOLVED that the Development Activity Update be received for information.

MOTION CARRIED.

## Adjournment

Moved by Councillor Hickey, seconded by Councillor MacKenzie: RESOLVED that the open session meeting of the Growth Committee be adjourned.

MOTION CARRIED.

The open session meeting of the Growth Committee held on March 16, 2021 was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.



### **GROWTH COMMITTEE REPORT**

Report Date	April 07, 2021				
Meeting Date	April 13, 2021				
Service Area	Transportation and				
	Environment Services				

His Worship Mayor Don Darling and Members of the Growth Committee

SUBJECT: Uptown Parking

#### **OPEN OR CLOSED SESSION**

This matter is to be discussed in Growth Committee Open Session.

#### **AUTHORIZATION**

	Michael Hugenholtz	John Collin
Primary Author	Commissioner/Dept. Head	City Manager

#### RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Growth Committee receive and file this update on parking in the Uptown area.

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Staff have received informal feedback regarding the challenges for residents of the South Central Peninsula in accessing on-street parking near their residences. This report includes a quick look at parking supply and demand and discusses various issues that will influence this picture in future years.

#### **PREVIOUS RESOLUTION**

N/A

#### STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Smart growth is the first priority of this Council, and it is mostly in the Uptown area where the City has seen the most growth and new development over the past several years. The lack of readily available parking could potentially derail the positive growth our community has seen in recent years.

#### REPORT

### **Existing Parking Rules**

On street parking in the South Central Peninsula is a combination of metered parking in the business district, and unmetered spaces in the more residential

areas.

Metered parking offers convenient options for shoppers and patrons of the numerous bars, restaurants and other retail outlets in the area. While there are exceptions, typically these spaces are limited to 2 hours maximum time to encourage frequent turnover. There are numerous public and private off-street parking options for those visitors needing more time. Each year the City generates approximately \$1,000,000 of revenue from metered on-street spaces. No overnight parking is permitted in these areas. One significant exception is the ability to park overnight in the entertainment district on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evening, from May to October each year.

In the more residential areas, many homes do not have off-street parking and rely on on-street parking. These residents are able to purchase an on-street residential parking permit for \$60.00 per vehicle per year to allow them to park on the street during overnight hours. Most of the parking in these areas is alternate side parking, whereby residents park on one side of the street for the first half of the month and then switch over to the other side for the remainder. This system has been in place for many years, and allows for important public works service delivery such as snow removal, street sweeping and other street maintenance.

The residential area is divided into a number of zones, and residential parking permits are zone-specific. This is done so that residents in areas of higher demand (i.e. nearer the business district) are not squeezed out by other residents parking closer to their work.

### **Existing Parking Supply and Utilization**

As part of the *Parking Strategy* of Phase 2 of our Transportation Strategic Plan an analysis was conducted of the existing parking supply and utilization in the Uptown Peninsula. This report will focus on the results of the on-street parking survey, as that is more likely to impact residents in the area. This survey was focused on the areas of highest demand, and found that the on-street parking system operated below the effective capacity at all times. At the time of peak demand (between 2-3 PM), demand only reached 54% of capacity, suggesting an abundance of parking is available.

This study was conducted in 2017. Since that time there have been some changes that could potentially impact supply and demand for both on-street and off-street parking. The development of Fundy Quay and the Telegraph Building (at the corner of Canterbury and Grannan Lane) has resulted in the reduction of off-street parking. As the Telegraph Building and The Wentworth reach completion and full occupancy we could see additional parking demand in the

adjacent areas. The Parking Strategy did include an analysis of the future parking supply & demand based on all the known developments at that time, which included most of the factors referenced above, as well as a general increase in the population growth in the Uptown. Based on those projections, the Uptown parking system was still projected to operate well below capacity, at approximately 65% utilization at peak times.

There have since been other issues that have the ability to impact parking demand, namely the impact from the COVID-19 pandemic. This has resulted in a significant shift to working from home. It remains to be seen if this will be a permanent shift, or we will see things return to normal once the pandemic is over. For these reasons it makes sense to take a fresh look at the parking supply and demand picture in/or around the 2023 timeframe.

### Multi-Modal Approach

The City's Transportation Strategic Plan recognizes the strong link between the various modes of transportation including vehicle traffic, public transit, and active transportation. Service level adjustments to transit and/or cycling for example will have an impact on the demand for parking in the South Central Peninsula and need to be taken into account. Investments into alternate modes of transportation also have the ability to eliminate or delay the need for costly infrastructure upgrades.

#### Feedback & Public Education

At the present time, neither the Integrated Customer Service Centre nor the Parking Commission directly receive any significant number of resident complaints about a lack of available on-street parking. The Growth & Community Services team advise that the development community have not raised any concerns about the supply of parking either.

In addition to the on-street parking availability, the off-street Parking Commission lots are also available for use outside of regular business hours for both residents and patrons of Uptown businesses. This may not be widely known, so this will be communicated to the public as part of an overall education program. This could be included as part of the City's messaging in the upcoming weeks.

#### SERVICE AND FINANCIAL OUTCOMES

The current system of on-street parking in the South Central Peninsula has been in place for many years. It represents an attempt to balance the various needs of

businesses and residents while allowing for important public works service delivery such as snow removal and street sweeping.

During the winter season snow can quickly build up and narrow the roadway to the point of restricting free flow of traffic. In the overnight hours the public works team is able to push back and/or remove snow completely from those areas where there is no parking. During the rest of the year the City does street sweeping on a nightly basis in the Central Business District, as well as in the residential zones.

#### INPUT FROM OTHER SERVICE AREAS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Input for this report was received from the Parking Commission and Growth & Community Services.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

None



# Succeed and Stay - Research Project

Project Update – April 2021







Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency

Agence de promotion économique du Canada atlantique





## Succeed and Stay Research Project

- Phase 1: Preliminary Work / Background Research
- Phase 2: Immigrant Survey
- Phase 3: Gap analysis of Immigrant Services offered in Saint John
- Phase 4: Interviews with a representative variety of newcomers
- Phase 5: Drafting Report
- Phase 6: Public Engagement & Immigration Strategy

We are here



## **Succeed and Stay – Research Project Timelines**

## Municipal Engagements to Date

- Adoption of Population Growth Framework
- Tri-Government Succeed and Stay Agreement Formalized
- Formalized Research Agreement with UNB
- Interim Update to Growth Committee
- Final Phase Update to Growth Committee

- Feb 2018
- Feb 2019
  - July 2019
- Dec 2019
- April 2020



## **Succeed and Stay – Research Project Timelines**

## Project Milestones

- Created an Advisory Committee
- Assembled an ad-hoc Research 'Tiger' Team
- Background Analysis, Preparatory Work, Survey Design
- Retained Services of Diversis Inc. for Gap Analysis
- Obtained Ethics Approval from UNB Research Ethics Board
- Launched & Completed First Ever Saint John Immigrant Survey
- Gap Analysis Completed
- Conducted semi-structed interviews with 40 Immigrants
- Completed Analysis of Survey Data
- Received Final Report on Survey
- Received Final Report on Immigrant Interviews

- Spring 2019
- Spring 2019
- Summer 2019
- Fall 2019
- Fall 2019
- Fall 2020
- Spring 2020
- Fall 2020
- Fall 2020
- Winter 2021
- Winter 2021





## **Next Steps**

Release Final Report to Public

(Spring 2021)

**Engagement Period** 

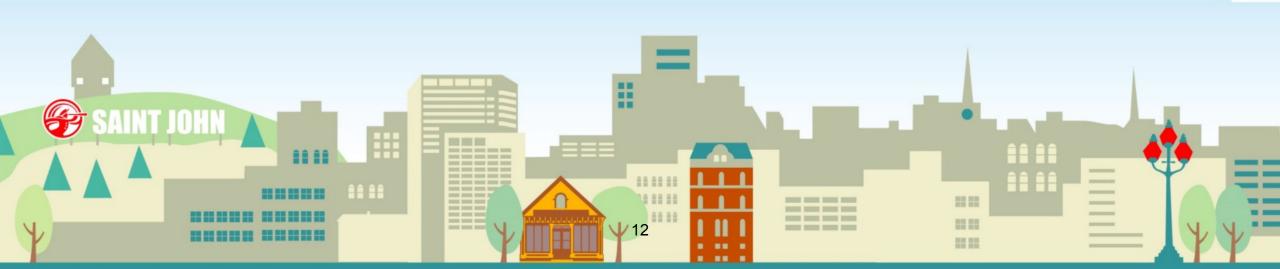
(Spring and Summer 2021)

Draft Immigration Strategy

(Summer and Fall 2021)

**Launch Strategy** 

(End of 2021)





## **Final Report**

**What to Expect** 

**Executive Summary** 

Gap Analysis

Report on Saint John Immigrant Survey

Report on Interviews with Immigrants

**Data Appendices** 

The report is extensive and presents new local data on our immigrant community.

It will be used as a background document for public engagement and ultimately drafting an immigration strategy for the region.

City staff have all the reports in hand now, and are consolidating them for public release in May

## **Engagement Period**

## **What to Expect**

The Engagement is being co-led by the City and SJ LIP.

The City intends to retain a consultant to support the engagement and drafting of strategy

## Municipal Engagement

 Review findings with each department and solicit policy implications.

## SJLIP Engagement

 Iteratively review findings with members of SJLIP to obtain feedback and recommendation on policy and actions for the immigration strategy

## **Business Engagement**

 Review findings with business community to obtain feedback for immigration strategy. This will be done in close partnership with City's Growth Partner's

## **Public Engagement**

 Review findings with the public and seek recommendations on actions for immigration strategy.





## Saint John Local Immigration Partnership Council

- City of Saint John
- Provincial Government:
  - Opportunities NB
  - Working NB
- Federal Government
- Envision Saint John
- Anglophone School District South
- Francophone School District South

- YMCA Newcomer Connections
- SJ Newcomers Centre
- PRUDE Inc
- Public Health Saint John Region
- Horizon Health
- UNB Saint John
- NBCC Saint John
- SJ Human Development Council



# **SJLIP Working Groups**



## **Immigration Strategy**

- The immigration strategy will be about <u>improving outcomes</u> for immigrants who choose to settle in Greater Saint John.
- It will be a multi-year plan with clear actions, and metrics with a focus on addressing gaps and systemic barriers.
- It will be monitored by SJLIP



## **Immigration Strategy Likely Areas of Focus** Jobs Health Settlement Care Education **SAINT JOHN** Social Public -Capital Services -18 -

# Opportunity

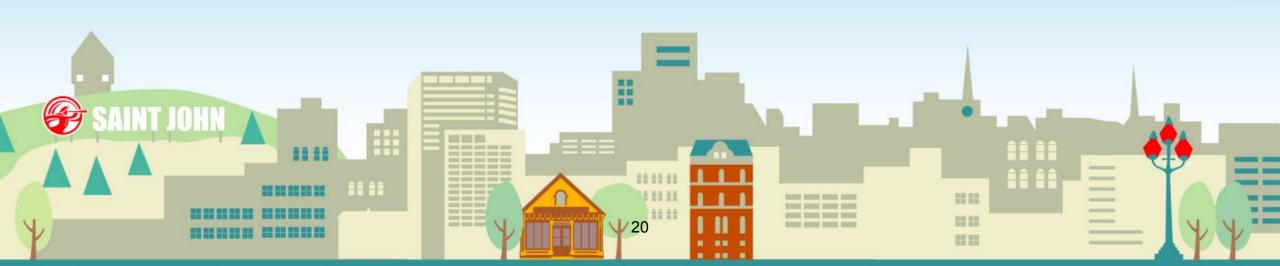
With the active support of Envision Saint John, ONB, and regional municipalities, the strategy could also be about:

- How to <u>attract</u> immigrants to Greater Saint John; and
- Setting annual targets for attracting immigrants.











### **GROWTH COMMITTEE REPORT**

Report Date	April 06, 2021			
Meeting Date	April 13, 2021			
Service Area	Growth and Community			
	Services			

His Worship Mayor Don Darling and Members of the Growth Committee

SUBJECT: Key Findings: Consultant Feedback on Growing Saint John

#### **OPEN OR CLOSED SESSION**

This matter is to be discussed in Growth Committee Open Session.

#### **AUTHORIZATION**

Primary Author	Commissioner/Dept. Head	City Manager
Phil Ouellette	Jacqueline Hamilton	John Collin

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that Growth Committee:

Direct the City Manager to consider the findings of the four consultant reports in the ongoing work of the City's strategic planning exercise where appropriate, Envision Saint John's strategic planning exercise and the upcoming orientation programming with the incoming Council 2021-2025.

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

At the direction of Strategic Plan Steering Committee, the City commissioned four consultants to provide thought provoking analyses and ideas on what the City needs to do to grow. The reports that were submitted involve best practice analysis, limited benchmarking, and review of the City's economic position based on publicly available data. The consultants were given less than a month to provide their educated opinions, and their feedback is intended to be used to stimulate discussion and approaches the City could consider for growing.

Each consultant took their own approach and while there is some consensus, the City was looking for a variety of perspectives, and so it is entirely expected that there is not a uniformity of ideas in the reports. It should also be noted that due to the brevity of time, and the scope of work of the project, the reports should not be seen as an exhaustive review of what the City should be doing to grow. Rather, the consultants' task was to quickly formulate a thought piece (based on their subject matter expertise) for the City to enhance and further develop its focus on growth. The intent of this staff report is to provide a lens through which Growth Committee may view the reports and highlights some important themes and considerations that are evident throughout.

#### PREVIOUS RESOLUTION

Click here to enter any previous relevant resolution.

#### STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

The City's ability to generate growth supports all the key pillars of Council Priorities 2016-2021, most notably in fiscal sustainability and growth and prosperity.

#### **REPORT**

The objective of this staff report is to provide the Growth Committee with a helpful summary of key strategic considerations after reviewing and consolidating findings from the four consultant reports recently submitted to the Strategic Plan Steering Committee. While the reports from the consultants do not necessarily reflect the views of the City, their feedback is thought provoking and the intention of this staff report is to help the City navigate the many pages of submitted analysis from the consultants and inform the process of defining how the City ought to respond.

The four submitted reports offer a large variety of insights on how the City of Saint John can equip itself to experience economic growth, while acknowledging the challenges and strengths we have as a community. The overwhelming majority of recommendations from the reports are well-known to the City and its economic development agency in our collective effort to generate growth.

One key theme across the reports is that the City of Saint John is currently pursuing many of the proposed recommendations highlighted the reports through municipal investments and programs, which in turn, confirm that the City is applying its focus and energy towards known priority areas for growth. Most notably, the City has established a vision for growth through its Growth Committee and its long-term growth strategies, which incorporate short and medium-term action items. The City's focus on employment, tax base and population growth aligns very nicely with the proposed outcomes outlined in the reports, along with the need for focus on key clusters of opportunities, all of which the community is currently pursuing, including: health, innovation and the development of the City's urban core and waterfront. The City's pursuit of a new regional economic development agency is also touted by the reports as a positive direction in maximizing growth outcomes for the City.

The City's pursuit of major initiatives over the past years (including new City Hall, sustainability initiatives, new economic development agency, new Committee structure, new website, new organizational structure, new secondary plan for the

urban core of the City, etc) has also supported a key finding across all the reports, namely that jurisdictions that embed a culture of change in their communities are more successful than others in a spurring growth.

One conclusion that can be drawn from the reports is that there is no silver bullet in achieving economic growth, and in addition, each community must find its own mix of actions and opportunities in achieving its desired economic growth objectives. The actions a City can take to generate growth are also not restrictive to its investment to traditional economic development efforts (i.e. business attraction, entrepreneurship mentorship, start-up incubation, employer support, population growth, strategic real estate development), but also on the services provided by the municipality that directly impact quality of life, the community's value proposition and it's unique competitive advantage.

The City should consider the findings presented in these reports as it moves forward to develop the City's Strategic Plan and related service and work plan priorities and collaborates with the region in the development of a Strategic Plan for Envision Saint John, the Regional Growth Agency. There are several considerations staff found especially pertinent to the Saint John context and broader growth agenda:

• Choosing our strategic advantage – To some extent, the City should prioritize the key opportunities it wants to become best-in-class in delivering, instead of trying desperately at being all things to all people. This will be difficult. We have historic approaches that are very much embedded in the broader growth landscape of the City and its partners. For example, while the overall budget of the City and its investments into strategic growth strategies have fluctuated over time, the general percentage of the investments have remained fairly static for years.

The City also needs to consider its competitive advantage. Do we want to compete with the outlying communities on single family development or focus on strengths related to urban density? Do we want more seniors living in Saint John? Young families? Young hipsters? Do we want to compete with Moncton on being the Province's transportation hub or Fredericton on its ability to attract Research and Development?

A common theme across the submitted consultant reports is that communities who have succeeded have built a very clear and distinguishable niche which created an opportunity for the community to become best-in-class. In turn, are we prepared as a community to be mediocre at something, rather than striving to be the best at everything? How would the community respond if existing services and standards changed in order to enhance our competitive advantage? If so, how do we prepare the community and Council for this shift? These questions will be

important considerations as the City and Envision Saint John develop their respective Strategic Plans later this year.

- Quality of Life The reports point to the prominence of quality of life in the competition for people, businesses and economic growth. How the City enhances its quality of life offerings will require decisions on focus, maximizing our investments, and clarifying desired community outcomes. This also invites an equally challenging exercise to help define and track our performance on quality-of-life outcomes. A municipal government plays an important role in quality of life by offering quality services related to transportation, streetscapes, parks and recreation, and arts and culture to name a few examples. The competition is stiff to attract and retain people in our community. Jobs, housing, schools, and local restaurants can be found almost everywhere, but quality of life can differ place to place. In turn, it will be important to define what are the facets of quality of life we should prioritize as a community and become best-in-class. There will be an opportunity through the City's upcoming Strategic Plan process to consider this important community issue.
- Responding to Stigma While not surprising, the four reports do highlight the challenge of Saint John's negative stigma, as often observed in the media or through the general narrative of many residents and non-residents. This is a long-standing issue in Saint John, and its impact on our ability to grow has not been fully analyzed. However, it is evident that this negativity is not helpful and should be improved. The *stigma enigma* is "how we can tangibly respond and begin shifting the existing sentiment?" It will be critical to be able to measure the impacts of our efforts in changing these sentiments before any action is taken. Improving this image will be an important area of focus for both the City and Envision Saint John going forward as new strategic priorities are set.
- Formalization of Strategic Partnerships The four reports do identify major opportunities to build stronger and more robust partnerships with some of the key economic partners in the community, most notably, through the regional collaboration with Envision Saint John and networks with the post-secondary sector and the Port. Framing-up these partnerships and establishing consensus on mutually beneficial strategies, outcomes, and targets should be considered as a very real and new tool for the City to use to maximize its growth outcomes. The City's 2021-2022 work plan prioritizes a collaborative venture with the Port (called Waterfront 2040) to implement a shared vision for the development of the Inner Harbour waterfront as a key deliverable to advance the vision in the Central Peninsula Secondary Plan. The City should also consider other community partnerships that should be enhanced.

### Aligning municipal budget allocation with desired growth outcomes:

This must remain a strategic consideration for the City of Saint John, and how it aligns its operating and capital spending to uphold its culture of "it's all about growth." We need to consider what operating investments are most pronounced in advancing growth outcomes in the community. Are they receiving suitable funding allocations to deliver on the City's unique competitive value proposition? In terms of capital investments, the City is actively involved in the pursuit of strategic infrastructure projects with expected impacts on growth including the recent partnerships with other levels of government to advance Fundy Quay project on the central waterfront and Green infrastructure investments that will spur major streetscape renewal on the Central peninsula. We also need to consider if there are other opportunities to embed these types of investments periodically through the capital budget planning process. If so, what percentage of growth-focused projects should comprise the City's total capital investments? In turn, how can the City equip itself to make sure it is investing on those projects with the highest possible returns all while upholding the City's unique value proposition?

#### SERVICE AND FINANCIAL OUTCOMES

n/a

#### INPUT FROM OTHER SERVICE AREAS AND STAKEHOLDERS

This report was assembled with feedback from the City Manager, the Director of Strategic Affairs and the Growth and Community Services team.

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

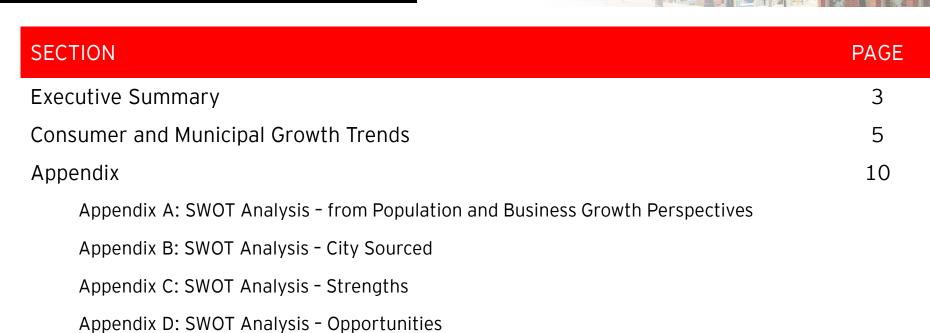
- Summary of Growth Considerations Four Consultants Reports on Growth
- 2. EY Report SWOT Analysis and Market Trends 2021
- 3. Dr's Tassonyi, Emery & Kent Ross Local Economic Development Issues to be Considered in a strategic plan in the City of Saint John
- 4. Gardiner Pinfold Budgeting for Growth
- 5. Don Mills A Few Economic Growth Ideas Plan the Work, Work the Plan

	Consultant Opinions			;		
Growth Considerations	Don Mills	EY	Tassoyni, Emery, Ross	Gardiner Pinfold	Comments	
Population Growth / Workforce Development		•	ı	1		
Continued focus on growing population through newcomers	х	х			Envision Saint John is the new regional lead on population growth, however the City needs to ensure our community is welcoming to newcomers and is meeting their needs.	
Establish aggressive population growth target of 1% per year	Х				City is currently growing at .6%. 1% growth is the national immigration average and the recommended target of the New Brunswick Multicultural Council among others.	
Development of programs that help attract and retain newcomers such as the connector program	Х	Х			This will be addressed in the new immigration strategy	
Focus on growing post secondary enrolment in the City		х			This is being pursued by UNB Saint John & NBCC. Envision Saint John is also reviewing this as part of their strategic plan	
Economic Development						
Development of Regional Economic Development Agency Strategic Plan	х				This is currently underway	
Establish metrics to evaluate Regional Economic Development Agency success	Х				This is currently underway	
Create a prosperous business environment / Creating advantages for investment		х	х	х	This merits further investigation. The City is strongly advocating for tax reform, which would have positive impacts on the City's ability to attract and retain businesses	
Infrastructure / Services			ı			
Upgrades to public spaces and improved access to recreation	х	х	х	х	The City is working towards a 5 year capital plan. The Fundy Quay development will considerably expand harbour passage, and upgrades to Loyalist plaza will create a refreshed vibrant public space. The City is aware that recreation and parks is underfunded in comparison with other cities of similar size and this should be addressed through the strategic planning process.	
Projects to revitalize urban core (particularly The Uptown and Waterfront)	х	х		Х	The waterfront is an untapped resource, and Fundy Quay will considerably improved public access to the waterfront. The City is also spending \$40M on infrastructure upgrades in the Central peninsula in the coming years	
Investments in infrastructre and services such as Port Saint John & UNB Saint John	х	х		Х	The Port is undergoing a \$205M expansion, with further discussion on increasing capacity for TEUs with the new CP rail connection.  UNB Saint John just completed a new 104 bed residence is actively pursuing a new Health and Social Innovation Centre	

Collaboration						
Improved relationship with Port Saint John and pursue Waterfront 2040	х				The City is actively working with the Port on many files of mutual interest including Waterfront 2040 which is on the work plan for both organizations in 2021	
Work towards regional collaboration and alignment		х	х		Considerable progress has been made on this front in economic development. The City will continue to explore options for collaboration with our regional municipal partners in areas such as recreation and will also continue to explore options for the regionalization of services where it makes sense.	
Marketing / Branding	ı	1	I	1		
Create a positive reputation for the City of Saint John and understand the "unfavourable" opinion some residents have	х	х	х		Reputation is incredibly important. It can take years to build, and moments to lose. In order for the City to grow, we need more businesses and residents to be amdassadors for the community. There is considerable negativaty from some spheres (on social media in particular) that is directed at our community in general. It is worth exploring further why locals would try to persuade a person not to live here, or a business to open or expand in Saint John. Obtaining these insights would allow our community to develop a strategy to improve our public standing both at home and across Canada.	
Improved marketing of Saint John as a place to work, live and visit	х	х	х	х	The City has just launched a new website to promote Saint John's value proposition. We will also be working closely with Envision Saint John as they market the whole region. The perennial issue is that good Marketing is expensive and the City and region has limited resources.	
Fiscal						
Establish a plan to address the city's fiscal health/performance			x		This is being addressed with the Long Term Financial Plan and the Sustainability initaitives. Long term fiscal health will also be influenced by the pending provincial municipal reforms	
Strategic approach to taxation			х		The Tassoyni, Emergy Ross report provides several thought provoking ideas on taxation, and should also be read in-light of previous work on this topic solicited by the City.	



## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**





RUE GRANNANST

Appendix E: SWOT Analysis - Weaknesses

Appendix F: SWOT Analysis - Threats

Appendix G: Round Table Discussion

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The City of Saint John asked EY to assist in performing a review and challenging existing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) to support the City's strategic planning process based on emerging external trends.



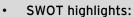
The City engaged EY to conduct a market trends analysis and update its SWOT to facilitate their strategic planning. Overall, the City is going through a rapid urban change with several internal and external pressures. The Strategic Affairs are preparing a city growth strategy to make Saint John a modern, desirable, and prosperous community, whereby a refreshed SWOT would provide them with greater visibility over market trends and dynamics.



- Reviewed the City's existing SWOT and grouped, organised, and prioritised the items based on our preselected criteria.
- Conducted a benchmarking exercise by looking into the EY Consumer Index to highlight relevant public trends and by identifying critical success factors behind growth in comparable fast growth cities like Kelowna, Halifax, and Oshawa.
- Prepared an independent SWOT analysis from the population and business growth perspectives to make the document collectively exhaustive.
- Held a workshop with the City's Strategic Group to review key insights and SWOT highlights, as well as to eliminate potential gaps and missed priorities.
- Delivered a single report with a refreshed SWOT with prioritised items.



- Canadians have become more cost conscious and budget conservative over the Pandemic. Austerity and Work from Home (WFH) will continue in the foreseeable future.
- · High growth cities are exemplary in:
  - 1. Appealing to residents through a favourable lifestyle and quality of life.
  - 2. Building a foundation for a prosperous business environment by reducing red tape, bureaucracy, and taxation, while providing business incentives.
  - 3. Having a strong post secondary educational ecosystem.
  - 4. Fostering employment opportunities and connecting talent pools with employers.
  - 5. Clearly communicating their growth strategies and results motivating investments and people choosing a successful community as a place where they want to live



- 1. SJ is advantageous in desirable quality of life, developed infrastructure, and new zoning legislation.
- 2. SJ can achieve growth through improving City marketing, attracting new residents with settlement incentives and employment assistance, investing further in infrastructure, and collaborating with regional partners to foster development.
- 3. SJ's growth may be hindered by low citizen retention and out migration, negative attitude, limited current and potential future air travel, and financial constraints.

## • A Total of four strategic opportunities which emerged from the 47 opportunities identified:

- 1. Encourage migration to SJ with settlement incentives and employment support programs for students and immigrants.
- 2. Improve City marketing to attract new residents, i.e., optimise communication channels to be user friendly, easy to find, and with a single growth message.
- 3. Regional collaboration and alignment, and strategic development of defining air access needs for SJ and Southern NB.
- 4. Invest in infrastructure and services to boost the economy and quality of life, such as expanding the port, waterfront development, business incubation space, UNB.



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The City has distinct strengths and opportunities that can elevate the community to be modern, prosperous, and highly developed. However, a high sense of urgency is needed to address growing weaknesses and threats.

## **STRENGTHS**

- Quality of life
  - Entertainment, arts and culture
- o Affordability, low commute times, connected/nimble and safe community
- o Ocean environment, waterfront and river system
- Infrastructure

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- High speed internet, commercial energy rates
- o Port, UNBSJ, 3 well-served industrial parks
- Reengineered zoning and development policy and Economic Development GSJ

## **WEAKNESSES**

- Negativity and critique from residents that translates into lack of confidence at the municipal level to enable positive change
- Complex communication channels and messaging (e.g., multiple websites)
- Homogenous and declining economy that is not stimulated by entrepreneurship
- Low appeal towards the young and immigrant demographics to settle in SJ
- o Employment concerns and limited post-secondary education options
- o Poor transportation and transit, in particular air accessibility
- o Relatively high tax rates in the region
- Multiple priorities and limited financial resources

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

- Encourage migration to SJ
- Settlement incentives (e.g., favourable tax rates and housing coop incentives)
- Connector employment program (employee placement system, students and immigrants)
- Improve City marketing to attract new residents, i.e., optimise communication channels to be user friendly, easy to find, and with a single growth message
- Regional collaboration and alignment, and strategic development of defining air access needs for SJ and Southern NB
- Invest in infrastructure and services to boost the economy and quality of life
- o Expand the port, waterfront development, business incubation space, UNB

## **THREATS**

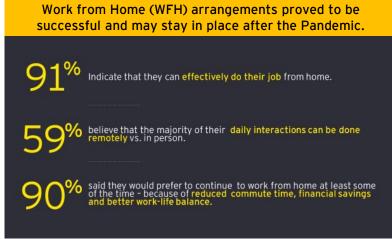
- Demographic shift towards an ageing and declining population
- o Youth and immigrant retention
- High tax rates and closing retail
- Employment concerns
- Negative COVID-19 impact on the community and fiscal deficits
- Limited airport/air access due to Moncton becoming a regional hub
- Negative attitude/lack of confidence in making a change or regional cooperation
- Degrading tourism assets and climate change

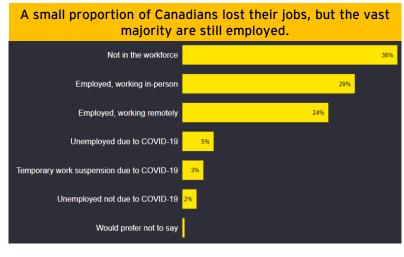


## EMERGING CONSUMER TRENDS THROUGHOUT THE PANDEMIC

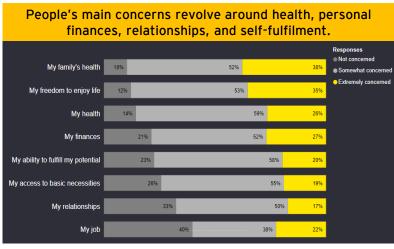
Canadians are resilient despite suffering financial losses. Most consumers remained employed, but their disposable incomes have declined and they are working from home. Thus, consumers look for more value and low-cost options. They focus on physical and mental well-being, while nurturing and caring for families and relationships. Moving forward, such observations will continue with more conservative spending habits.

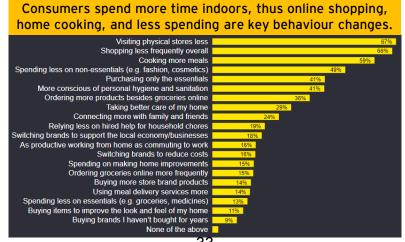


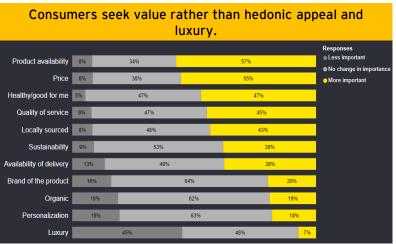




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## VALUE PROPOSITIONING AND ECONOMIC POLICY LESSONS FROM HIGH GROWTH CITIES

Saint John can replicate major development drivers from Kelowna, Halifax, and Oshawa to rejuvenate the local economy and instigate population growth. In particular, the City needs to create a favourable appeal for the quality of life and employment opportunities.



## 1. Lifestyle Appeal

People are seeking a comfortable, safe, and affordable lifestyle. Kelowna uses its climate and environmental advantage to attract young and middle-aged demographics. People enjoy the warm weather, wineries, ski hills, and lake activities. Saint John can do a similar value proposition but with forests and the oceanside.

## 2. Prosperous Business Environment



Growth cities excel in reducing red tape on zoning and development, establishing an economic vision, lowering costly bureaucracy and taxation. Kelowna and Halifax went 1 step further by establishing think tanks, angel investing, and entrepreneurial support entities, which attracted investment. Research shows that successful policy should encourage businesses to flourish with a natural industry attrition.

## 3. Advanced Education Systems



Post-secondary institutions are key to attracting the youth. Halifax has 5 major universities in the city vicinity, which positively contribute to population growth. International students are also pulled in through a variety of degrees and accessibility. If students can find employment and they enjoy living in a particular city, then there is a likelihood of them settling down.

## 4. Employment Opportunities



A promising business environment creates much desired jobs, which in return attract more people. However, employers must have access to talent pools and vice versa. Halifax Connector Program has been key in integrating newcomers to Canada and students within their local community by introducing potential employers with the labour force.

## 5. City Marketing and Transparency

Investor and citizen confidence are high when they can understand and acknowledge municipal aspirations and states. Halifax Partnership is an economic development organisation that guides the city's economic policy, whose dashboard presents a growth KPI live feed to the public with factors such as GDP, population change, etc.

## GROWTH TRENDS ACROSS 3 SPOTLIGHT CITIES IN CANADA

In 2020, Canadian urban population grew by a combined 1.3% (vs 1.7% in 2019) to approximately 27.3 million residents. 90% of the growth is attributed to international migration. Below are comparable fast growth cities to Saint John and how they are achieving positive results.

Location	Kelowna, BC	Halifax, NS	Oshawa, ON
Population Change	4,000 new residents / +1.9% in 2020 Total ~142,000 citizens Expected to grow by 45,000 new residents by 2040	9,000 new residents / +2% in 2020 Total ~449,000 citizens Expected to grow by 100,000 new residents by 2031	9,000 new residents / +2.1% in 2020 Total ~423,000 citizens Expected to grow by 50,000 new residents by 2035
Value Propositioning	Lifestyle appeal for the middle aged and elderly with wineries, warm climate, lake and outdoor activities, skiing, and affordable real estate prices.  Younger demographics seek employment and entrepreneurship opportunities with some of the above mentioned benefits. Kelowna is the most entrepreneur friendly city in Canada (Canadian Federation of Business).	Quality of life appeal through a family-friendly environment, recreational facilities, affordability and medium cost of living, and the ocean advantage.  A large concentration of post-secondary institutions attracts the young demographic. Several economic and employment programs help with growing the local economy and assisting new grads in settling by finding job opportunities.	Close proximity to Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area is the main advantage for the city.  Especially during the pandemic, people are looking to save their money or invest in real estate. Affordability and significantly lower cost of living combined with flexible work from home arrangements encourage people to move into this community. In addition, the area is family-friendly and more jobs are expected.
Economic Policy	Accelerate Okanagan (think tank and angel investing). Invest Kelowna (economic development commission). Official Community Plan 600 tech companies employing 8,000 people and generating \$1.3 billion in annual revenues.	Halifax Economic Growth Plan. Halifax Partnership (economic development organisation). Connector Program (employment assistance). Economic progress dashboard publicly available.	Oshawa Growth and Development (an overview of economic and development policies). TeachingCity Oshawa (an initiative focused on post-secondary collaboration and encouraging students to stay in the area)
Education	UBC Okanagan (est. in 2005) - 11,000 current students, 27.5% international students. Okanagan College Kelowna Campus (est. in 1990) - 9,000 current students, 16.7% international students.	Dalhousie University, Saint Mary's University, Mount Saint Vincent University, NSCAD University, University of King's College, and numerous others with ~35,000 students with 20% being international.	Durham College, Trent University Durham GTA, and Ontario Tech University with a total student population of ~34,000 and 10.5% international body.

35

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## HALIFAX'S CONNECTOR PROGRAM

In 2009, Halifax launched a simple and effective networking program, designed to match immigrants and students with established business and community leaders. The program helps newcomers to find employment, while increasing talent pool and access to local employers.

**Program** Goal and Annual **Objectives**  Support the Economic Growth Plan by helping achieve Halifax's "Attract and Retain Talent" goal of growing the city's labour force to 271,000 by 2021.

- Sign up 200 new Connectors.
- Re-engage 50 inactive Connectors.
- Sign up 500 new Connectees.
- Ensure at least 200 Connectees find full-time employment.

#### Results

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According to 2019 Connector Client Survey:

- 65% of Connectees who found jobs said the Program played a role
- of Connectees would 86% recommend the Program to a friend

How does the Program work?

Step 1 Potential Connectees and Connectors apply through the Halifax Partnership website.

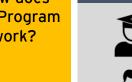
#### Step 2 Program facilitator reviews applicants, contacts Connectees to discuss their goals and backgrounds, and matches suitable Connectees with Connectors.

# Step 3

#### Connectees and Connectors schedule and conduct 30-minute meetings (physically and virtually) to discuss industry details, opportunities, news, etc.

#### Step 4 Within 2 days after a meeting, Connectors must refer and introduce Connectees to at least 3 people in their network.

Step 5 Connectees rapidly expand their professional networks and knowledge of the local market, which increases their chances of getting a job.













By 2019, the following milestones were achieved:

3.200+ Connectees

1.400+ Connectors

1.400+ Jobs Found

Notable **Partners** 

















HALIFAX PARTNERSHIP

























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# APPENDIX A: SWOT ANALYSIS - FROM POPULATION AND BUSINESS GROWTH PERSPECTIVES

The City has distinct strengths and opportunities that can elevate the community to be modern, prosperous, and highly developed. However, a high sense of urgency is needed to address growing weaknesses and threats from population (white font) and business perspectives (yellow).

#### **STRENGTHS**

Quality of life

Access to waterfront and river system

Mild winters compared to the west coast of Canada

Affordable real estate

Nature and low density of population

Safety and low crime

Dedicated growth engine under newly formed Economic Development Greater SJ

Sector strength - Energy, Health, Logistics and Manufacturing, ICT/Cyber and Aguaculture

Amongst the top 10 foreign trade zone in Canada

Third largest deep water port infrastructure in Canada and access to multi-modal transportation and proximity to the US Eastern Seaboard

Three well serviced industrial parks

Commercial Energy rates

#### **OPPORTUNITIES**

- Strengthen campaigns to focus on NB quality of life and target younger demographics/remote workers
- 2. Launch river tours and nature adventure tours
- 3. Offer tax incentives to move to NB
- 4. Loosen immigration restrictions and solve the recognition of professional credentials
- 5. Connector Program (employee placement system)

- 6. Attract foreign direct investments
- 7. Transform and better utilise vacant retail and commercial space
- 8. Invest in Ocean Technologies
- 9. Positive pandemic attract knowledge workers
- 10. Flawless execution on EDGSJ mandate to garner more financial support from Provincial/Federal Govt
- 11. Accentuate selected sector R&D and Innovation
- 12. Low cost of capital (key enabler)

#### WHAT'S MISSING?

## **WEAKNESSES**

Entrepreneurial climate and attitude

High tax rates compared to surrounding communities

Industrial feel

Internal

Access to international travel

Small number of employment opportunities

Blue collar work force is prominent

Transit options

Too many priorities and limited financia resources

Lack of exposure to world marke

Access to qualified workforce in sufficient quantity

Limited R&D investment capacity

Confusion over the newly formed economic development entity (online presence)

# **THREATS**

Threat of airport closure

Retail closures

Further suburbanization

Declining employment and commercial activity

Increased taxes

Find the right balance between large industrial / resource based capital intensive business and knowledge base economy to attract residents to Saint John

GHG Reduction Target and pandemic lessons will significantly impact Industry (Oi and Gas) and Supply Chain moving focus to local production and reduction in travel/exports

Significant reduction in Airport Services

Climate Change (Rising Ocean Levels)

# APPENDIX A SWOT ANALYSIS - A COMPLETE LIST OF OPPORTUNITIES

The City can capitalise on numerous opportunities to achieve population and economic growth. Below is a consolidated list of options from the combined external (1-13) and municipal (14-47) assessments. We encourage the City to pick the top 10 opportunities rather than trying to work on too many in order to achieve momentum and results.

#### **OPPORTUNITIES**

- Strengthen campaigns to focus on NB quality of life and target younger demographics/remote workers
- 2. Launch river tours and nature adventure tours
- 3. Offer tax incentives to move to NB
- 4. Loosen immigration restrictions and solve the recognition of professional credentials
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- 10. Flawless execution on EDGSJ mandate to garner more financial support from provincial/federal governments
- 11. Accentuate selected sector R&D and innovation
- 12. Low cost of capital (key enabler)
- 13. Concierge service for new residents

- 1. Strengthen campaigns to focus on NB quality of life 14. Attracting sports events and tournaments
  - 15. Central peninsula school
  - 16. Regionalisation
  - 17. New jobs in the next decade
  - 18. Developing ethnic communities
  - 19. Better place, better branding
  - 20. Lobby for higher concentration of federal and provincial offices in the city
  - 21. Improved transit links
  - 22. MBA program uptown
  - 23. Creating a walkable uptown
  - 24. Completed runway expansion
  - 25. Ferry connections
  - 26. Attracting international flights
  - 27. More tourist activities
  - 28. New website for the city
  - 29. SJ energy dividend
  - 30. Spreading positive news

- 31. Attracting immigrants
- 32. Fundy Quay project
- 33. Selling the city as a prime location for satellite offices
- 34. Elimination of double tax to promote development

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- 35. Port expansion
- 36. Growing IT hub
- 37. Tidal and wind power (renewable energy)
- 38. Expanding the health sector
- 39. Ashburn Lake developments
- 40.SJ REDA
- 41. Filling in vacant commercial space
- 42. Innovation district
- 43. Milledgeville development
- 44. Inclusionary zoning policies
- 45. Regionalisation
- 46. Encourage entrepreneurship
- 47. Diversity training

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The City has distinct strengths and opportunities that can elevate the community to be modern, prosperous, and highly developed. However, a high sense of urgency is needed to address growing weaknesses and threats.

#### **STRENGTHS**

- Beautiful Nature and Environment
- Infrastructure
- Public Safety

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• Employment in certain industries

## WEAKNESSES

- Negativity and critique from residents
- Aging recreational and residential facilities
- Limited post-secondary education options
- Poor transportation and transit
- Pollution
- · Homogenous and declining economy

#### **OPPORTUNITIES**

- Improving quality of life for current residents
- Attracting migrants (cross province and international)
- Investing in commercial and residential developments
- Fostering employment opportunities
- Attracting new industries and diversifying the economy

### **THREATS**

- Declining population and demographic change
- Climate change
- Fiscal deficits
- Competition from other municipalities
- Lack of investment in the local economy

# **APPENDIX C: SWOT ANALYSIS - STRENGTHS**

The City has a total of 37 strengths that are grouped into 3 categories: low, medium, and high significance. Overall, the main value propositioning is derived from beautiful nature and environment, infrastructure, public safety, and employment in certain industries.

STRENGTHS				
Low	Medium	High		
1. Heritage Cluster	1. Low Commute Times	1. Affordable Real Estate		
2. City Market	2. Family Friendly	<ul><li>2. 3<sup>rd</sup> Largest Port in Canada</li><li>3. Low Crime Rates</li></ul>		
3. Level 1 Trauma Centre in NB	3. Access to Green Spaces			
4. Many Jobs Available to English Speakers	4. Natural Beauty	4. Large Oil Refinery / Energy Sector		
5. Dense Central Peninsula	5. Mild Winter	5. Welcoming Community		
	6. Cultural Capital of Canada	6. Multinational HQ		
	7. Only City on Bay of Bundy	7. 3 Well-Serviced Industrial Parks		
	8. Saint John Energy / Electricity Prices	8. Strong Education System		
	9. Good Restaurant Scene	9. Highway through Core		
	10. Brick Park	10. Cruise Industry		
	11. Fibre to Home	11. Harbour Passage		
	12. High Quality Regional Facilities	12. SCDW Project		
	13. Pedway System	13. Significant Exports Flowing through the City		
	14. Proximity to USA	14. Class I Railway		
	15. Post-Secondary Education Options	15. Talented Workforce		
		16. Starting to Run the City Like a Business		
		17. Long Term Financial Planning		

<sup>\*</sup> The factors are categorized based on perceived issue importance from several surveys, e.g., Civic Issues in Calgary.

Significance

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## APPENDIX D: SWOT ANALYSIS - OPPORTUNITIES

Similarly, the City has a total of 36 opportunities. Overall, Saint John can benefit from improving quality of life for current residents, attracting migrants, investing in commercial and residential developments, fostering employment opportunities, and attracting new industries.

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

Low	Medium	High			
<ol> <li>Building a Hotel Near the Airport</li> <li>Concierge Service for New Residents</li> <li>Attracting Sports Events and Tournaments</li> </ol>	<ol> <li>Central Peninsula School</li> <li>Regionalisation</li> <li>New Jobs in the Next Decade</li> <li>Developing Ethnic Communities</li> <li>Better Place, Better Branding</li> <li>Lobby for Higher Concentration of Federal and Provincial Offices in the City</li> <li>Improved Transit Links</li> <li>MBA Program Uptown</li> <li>Creating a Walkable Uptown</li> <li>Completed Runway Expansion</li> <li>Ferry Connections</li> <li>Attracting International Flights</li> <li>More Tourist Activities</li> <li>New Website for the City</li> <li>SJ Energy Dividend</li> <li>Spreading Positive News</li> </ol>	<ol> <li>Attracting Immigrants</li> <li>Fundy Quay Project</li> <li>Selling the City as a Prime Location for Satellite Offices</li> <li>Elimination of Double Tax to Promote Development</li> <li>Port Expansion</li> <li>Growing IT Hub</li> <li>Tidal and Wind Power (Renewable Energy)</li> <li>Expanding the Health Sector</li> <li>Ashburn Lake Developments</li> <li>SJ REDA</li> <li>Filling in Vacant Commercial Space</li> <li>Innovation District</li> <li>Milledgeville Development</li> <li>Inclusionary Zoning Policies</li> <li>Regionalisation</li> <li>Encourage Entrepreneurship</li> <li>Diversity Training</li> </ol>			

<sup>\*</sup> The factors are categorized based on perceived value creation in the City and importance of market trends.

Significance

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# APPENDIX E: SWOT ANALYSIS - WEAKNESSES

Moreover, the City has 39 weaknesses. Saint John is facing negativity and critique from residents, aging recreational and residential facilities, limited post-secondary education options, poor transportation and transit, pollution, homogenous and declining economy.

WEAKNESSES					
Low	Medium	High			
<ol> <li>No Uptown Grocery Store</li> <li>Too Many City Brands</li> <li>Fog and Cool Summers</li> <li>Heritage District is Too Small</li> <li>Majority of Businesses Closing at 5pm</li> </ol>	<ol> <li>Lack of Knowledge from the People "Selling" the City</li> <li>High Water / Sewer Rates</li> <li>Perceived Financial Crisis at City Hall</li> <li>Lack of Development Outside of Uptown</li> <li>Slow Pace of Life</li> <li>Poor Health of Some Local Residents</li> <li>Old Sports Facilities</li> <li>Disjointed Settlement</li> <li>Perception of Lack of Parking</li> <li>Lack of Trust Between Partners</li> <li>Lack of Physical Recreation Assets</li> <li>Lowest Growth vs Every Other Atlantic CMA</li> <li>Homelessness</li> <li>Youth Do not Have a Vision of Staying</li> <li>Past Financial Decisions</li> <li>Lack of Own Source of Revenue</li> <li>Poor Succession Planning and Information Silo's</li> </ol>	<ol> <li>High Property Taxes</li> <li>High Poverty Rates</li> <li>Pollution</li> <li>Employers not Hiring Immigrants</li> <li>Labour Supply and Demand Misalignment</li> <li>Lack of New Housing</li> <li>High Commercial Vacancy Rate</li> <li>Higher Salaries in Other Places</li> <li>Difficult Access for People with Disabilities</li> <li>Lack of Single Unit Buildings and Cost Competitive Methods for such Development</li> <li>Limited Night Life</li> <li>Limited Degree Options in Saint John</li> <li>Difficult to Get Public Sector Jobs without French</li> <li>Lack of Infrastructure to Build New Developments</li> <li>Limited Transit</li> <li>Lack of Exposure to World Markets</li> <li>Reliance on Debt</li> </ol>			

<sup>\*</sup> The factors are categorized based on perceived negative impact on opportunities and strengths.

Significance

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# **APPENDIX F: SWOT ANALYSIS - THREATS**

Finally, the City has a total of 27 threats. In the near future, Saint John may face devastating effects from a declining population and demographic change, climate change, fiscal deficits, competition from other municipalities, and lack of investment in the local economy.

THREATS						
Low	Medium	High				
<ol> <li>Heritage Planning Restrictions and Lack of Designation</li> <li>Telegraph Journal has a Negative Slant Towards the City</li> <li>UNB not HQ in the City</li> </ol>	<ol> <li>Sprawl / Low Density</li> <li>Competition Between Three Cities</li> <li>Quality of Life is Perceived Better or More Affordable Outside the City</li> <li>Lack of Political Willingness from GNB on Municipal Reform</li> <li>Local Negativity and Public Opinion</li> <li>More New Housing in KV</li> <li>Regional Facilities (Capital Cost Sharing)</li> <li>Losing Tenants at TD Station and Other Facilities</li> <li>Online Shopping Affecting Local Shops and Malls</li> <li>Major Industrial Accidents</li> <li>Lack of Transportation Options</li> <li>Cyber Security</li> </ol>	<ol> <li>City's Financial Situation</li> <li>Closure of Service Based Businesses Lack of Qualified Labour for Certain Sectors</li> <li>Outmigration</li> <li>Flight from Urban Core to Suburbs</li> <li>Smallest Airport in Southern NB with a Risk of Closure</li> <li>Aging Population</li> <li>Increasing Rent Costs to Tenants Due to Supply Shortage and Lack of External Buyers</li> <li>Climate Change (Rising Ocean Levels)</li> <li>Restrictive Building and Housing Plans May Limit Investment and Growth</li> <li>Declining Industries (e.g., Oil)</li> <li>Tax Base Growth</li> <li>COVID-19 Impact</li> </ol>				

<sup>\*</sup> The factors are categorized based on perceived potential cost and damage to the City.

Significance

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## APPENDIX G: ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

Q1. Given the strategic growth pillars of the City, please indicate the top (3) strengths that you believe offer tremendous potential for growth.

- Urban experience, arts and culture, connected and nimble
- Regional setting, beautiful, regional asset, port, UNBSJ
- Waterfront and river system, port, manufacturing/logistics
- Affordability, high speed internet, low commute times

#### Q2. Identify the top 3 threats for the City.

- Population decline, airport/air access, COVID impact, tired tourism assets, NB push to be build
- Negative attitude, lack of external brand, regional cooperation
- Tax rate, low retention rates (youth and immigrants), lack of jobs matched with talent
- Airport, retail, balance in industrial and knowledge base and industrial/residential quality of life

# Q3. Identify (3 new) opportunities the City should explore further.

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- Waterfront development. Business incubation space, drastically expand UNB
- Urban and waterfront development, grow the health and university cluster, supercharge population growth efforts
- Housing coop incentives to answer affordable housing, waterfront development and port partnership, knowledge workers, e-commuting
- Southern NB profile enhanced as a growth leader, a full repositioning based on performance

# Q4. Prioritize your top 3 opportunities from the list.

- Immigration, port expansion, low cost of living
- Supercharge population growth, grow the health and university cluster, urban and waterfront development
- E-commuting with knowledge worker with digital campaign, nature/water/port
- Regional collaboration and alignment, investment into infrastructure and assets, with strategic development define air access needs for Southern NB

# Q5. What investments would you prioritize for the City to foster growth for the City?

- Job matching, leverage port, expand industrial parks, market affordable real estate
- Quality of life, investments, arts, culture and recreation, waterfront development, urban infrastructure
- Schools, housing needs, incentives
- Outdoor natural walking trails, active transportation, pedestrian systems and roads

# Local Economic Development: Issues to be Considered in a Strategic Plan in the City of Saint John. Potential Benefits and Pitfalls

Dr. Almos Tassonyi, Dr. Herb Emery and Kent Ross MA February 19, 2021

#### SUMMARY:

Findings from a Comparison of Saint John to other Cities:

- 1) SJ may be underperforming in terms of growing its potential employment and income and retaining the income that it creates and the population that it attracts
  - i. Saint John's economic performance does not stand out as weak but is likely not as strong as it could be, given its unique assets and advantages not present in other cities.
  - ii. Goods sector employment is flat in Saint John but that is true everywhere in Canadian cities that are comparable to Saint John.
  - iii. Service sector employment growth in Saint John is weak as with all cities to which it is comparable. Big cities have service sector employment growth, smaller cities have not.
  - iv. The number of service sector jobs excluding public sector per goods sector job in Saint John is in line with other cities its size, but lower than Moncton and Halifax, and London. Moncton is much higher because of warehousing and transportation.
  - v. Saint John's service employment is relatively high compared to other cities for professional services, business and support services. Saint John is weaker on retail and wholesale
  - 2) SJ's competition is from other cities in the region, and with the communities surrounding it. Population growth driven by the regional economy stimulate residential construction and tax base increases outside of the City in places like Quispamsis
    - i. The City of Saint John is not competitive for attracting residents to the CMA to locate in the City over Quispamsis and Rothesay.
    - ii. Residential construction and population growth are occurring more outside of the City than in it.
    - iii. The City of Saint John has high revenue per capita which is offset by a disproportionately high per capita spending on police and fire protection services. It appears that those high expenditures have crowded out spending on recreation and culture and general government.

In our view, based on these comparisons, the City of Saint John challenges for improving its tax base are to:

- 1) Creating business conditions that allow its anchor industries, including the Port, to expand and to retain more of the business services, and supply chain businesses, around those industries.
- 2) Create the conditions that compete for service businesses as a way to diversity the local economy, create new export opportunities and provide the ancillary support needed to attract, retain and support the development of head offices.

3) Create the conditions, and develop the communities and neighbourhoods, that attract population to reside in the City of Saint John over outlying communities.

# WHAT CAN THE CITY OF SJ DO WITH ITS REVENUE, SPENDING, INVESTMENT AND OTHER STRATEGIES TO GROW ITS TAX BASE?

- 1) Create a more positive reputation for the City do things the right way, avoid negativity
- 2) Create the budget capacity and flexibility to make positive investments
  - a. Look for a tax increment from the communities benefiting from the regional economy driven by the City to relieve the City's fiscal pressures
  - b. Address the debt burden
- 3) Other strategies for creating advantages for business investment
  - a. Facilitate local initiative from the bottom-up
  - b. Initiate discussion with other orders of government to begin the process of place-based development agreements

#### **Local Economic Development in Saint John: A Strategic Approach**

The City of Saint John has embarked on the development of a strategic plan to guide the City in developing and implementing policy that will enhance the local tax base. The encouragement of economic development should enhance the City's attractiveness to employment creators as well as providing the basis for enhancing the amenities available to the local population to retain and increase the City's resident population and property tax base that currently leaks outside of the City. As part of the development of the plan, the City is seeking advice on ways to improve their taxing and spending policies; possible policy initiatives that can be implemented at the local level and an evaluation of broader experience in local economic revitalization policies including identifying success and possible pitfalls that should be considered in the development of a strategic plan. In particular, the City is seeking advice on developing an optimal budgeting approach so that its services support the continuing development and diversification of the local economy and concomitantly, the local revenue base.

How can mature municipalities create the conditions for revitalization and growth in the revenue base that can be sustained in the long run? Several approaches can be identified from experience in other jurisdictions and from the literature on local economic development. These include enhancing the effectiveness of current service provision, reviewing tax, expenditure and investment policies in a context of encouraging the growth of the local fiscal base, expanding and enhancing traditional incentives to commercial and industrial location and developing new policy frameworks that draw upon the experiences with cluster and data driven initiatives in other jurisdictions. An overriding issue is whether the lessons from the experiences of other jurisdictions that have employed these approaches are applicable to the circumstances faced by the City of Saint John.

Based on our assessment of other jurisdictions that are statistically comparable to the City of Saint John, and/or considered to be comparators based on subjective, or expert, opinion we identify two primary objectives for the City of Saint John. First, the City like many jurisdictions its size has had weak business sector service employment growth suggesting that jobs and incomes are leaking out to other larger centres where we do see service sector employment growing – the City must create conditions to foster service sector business competitiveness. Second, the industrial base of the City is strong but the City loses population to surrounding

communities suggesting that the City is not competitive for attracting residents. Resolving the competitiveness of service sector businesses in the City and creating residential conditions to encourage more of the inflow of population to the region to choose to live in the City will be key to growing the tax base.

#### We find:

- 1) SJ has many comparators, and there are cases like Moncton which are not comparators
- 2) SJ is not performing worse than other cities like it as they also face common pressures to grow the service sector employment base
- 3) SJ may be underperforming in terms of growing its potential employment and income and retaining the income that it creates and the population that it attracts
- 4) SJ's competition for service sector businesses is from other cities in the province, and with the communities surrounding it for resident population.
- 5) Population growth driven by the regional economy stimulates residential construction and tax base increases outside of the City in places like Quispamsis

Those add up to that SJ can build it tax base by:

- A. Creating business conditions that encourage its anchor industries, including the Port, to expand employment and production in the City.
- B. Creating business conditions that retain more of the service, and supply chains businesses stimulated by the anchor industries to locate in the City over other locales.
- C. Creating communities and neighbourhoods that attract population to reside in the City rather than the suburbs.

What Can The City Of SJ Do With Its Revenue, Spending, Investment And Other Strategies To Grow Its Tax Base?

- 1) Create a more positive reputation for the City do things the right way, avoid negativity
- 2) Create the administrative and budget capacity and flexibility to make positive investments
  - a. Look for a tax increment from the communities benefiting from the regional economy driven by the City to relieve the City's fiscal pressures
  - b. Address the debt burden
- 3) Other strategies for creating advantages for business investment
  - c. Facilitate local initiative from the bottom-up
  - d. Initiate discussion with other orders of government to begin the process of place-based development agreements

#### **Challenges and Shocks**

A small mature city must cope with a myriad of challenges including providing the basis for an attractive environment for people and businesses to thrive in order to provide the means to fund the services necessary for providing that basis. Service provision must be competitive, efficient and equitable. Constraints posed by the structure of the local government system (eg. interurban cost-sharing of municipal services) and provincial- municipal relations, (eg local tax policy), the historic and current state of infrastructure (eg asset management policy and the relative state of good repair), land use and the structure of the local economy (age composition and levels of education) must be confronted and overcome. Further, the built form of the urban environment may also pose challenges.

The City of Saint John on the surface would seem to have many municipalities that could be comparators. Many smaller cities in Canada, like Saint John, have heavy industry, much of it based on natural resources, but not always, that has faced some headwinds over the past two decades. It would be natural to think of Thunder Bay, Sudbury, Sault Ste Marie, Peterborough, Sarnia and Chatham as providing good comparisons for Saint John but other than their size, distance from major markets, struggles to grow from their traditional anchor industries, they are not like Saint John. Many other cities that would often be brought up as potential comparators because of their historical size comparison to Saint John and their manufacturing industries include Oshawa, Barrie, and Hamilton but these municipalities are experiencing growth that comes from being part of the GTA's commuting hinterland. Kitchener-Waterloo-Cambridge, and London are also tied to the GTA but have developed independently with manufacturing, post-secondary institutions and financial services providing a diversified tax base. That limits the potential lessons for Saint John in terms of a playbook for growing the tax base.

Several factors make Saint John unique among Canadian jurisdictions other than the large cities. Saint John has a deep water seaport with capacity to grow its business. The city's industrial base is more diverse that most cities of its size. Along with pulp and paper and beer brewing, the city is home to Canada's largest oil refinery which exports rather than serving a regional market. Saint John has head offices of relatively large (for Canada) exporting businesses. Until the pandemic, Saint John had a level of air service only shared by Sudbury and Thunder Bay among other Canadian cities of its size east of Manitoba. Head offices, airport access and a broader

base of industries also distinguishes Saint John from smaller cities along the St. Lawrence seaway which have seaports.

Thinking broadly of the experience of rustbelt cities in Canada and the United States, Saint John is unique in the sense that its heavy industries have not grown in terms of total employment, but they have not declined like in most other places. Where many cities seek to backfill or replace shuttering anchor employers, Saint John has the opportunity to grow further from its traditional industry and business base (including the port) and to build on that industrial base. This opportunity is what distinguishes Saint John from the province's smaller cities like Miramichi, Bathurst and Campbellton-Dalhousie which are all seeking to survive following losses of major employers like mills and smelters operated by multinationals that withdrew from the province.

Closer to Saint John, the natural comparators are Halifax, Moncton, Fredericton, and Charlottetown but Saint John lacks the presence of the provincial and federal governments that we see in the other cities including Crown Corporations like NB Power and the Atlantic Lottery Corporation. Unlike those cities, Saint John does not have a major comprehensive university of the same scale.

Richard Saillant contrasts Saint John with Fredericton and Moncton, as well as the southern region's historical economic performance, to conclude that the Saint John census metropolitan area (CMA) has been struggling for at least two decades. Saillant notes that since 2010, Saint John's CMA population aged 15 to 64 is down more than 4,000 (or 5%) and that excluding the public sector, the CMA lost 6% of its jobs between 2009 and 2019. In contrast, the Fredericton CA and the Moncton CMA have been performing better. Saillant highlights that Moncton has supplanted Saint John as the recognized main growth engine for the province as since 2000 the CMA's population has grown 30%. From 2009 to 2019, employment and the labour force in the Moncton CMA were up 12% and 11% respectively which Saillant assesses is in the middle of the pack among Canadian CMAs. Saillant notes, however, that three fifths of the 8,800 jobs added between 2009 and 2019 in the Moncton CMA were in the public sector, and the remainder were added in industries that cater to local or regional demand such as retail trade. Employment increases in transportation and warehousing have been strong while, like Saint John,

manufacturing and the "business, building and other support services" industry (which contains most contact centers) lost in total more than 2,000 jobs.<sup>1</sup>

Moncton's stronger employment growth may simply reflect that its hinterland is more populated. In a recent presentation, Don Mills identified that within feasible commuting zones around Saint John and Moncton, there are sizeable populations. Within a 75km radius of Moncton, Mills shows that there is a population of just over 217,000, while the same radius around Saint John defines a region with a population of nearly 169,000. Saint John City population is 44% of the Mills commuting zone population, and the CMA has 77% of the commuting zone population. The City of Moncton in contrast has 34% of the commuting zone population while the CMA has 67% of the commuting zone population. Mills also shows overlap between the feasible commuting zones for Saint John, Moncton and Fredericton which highlights the competitive pressures cities have as hubs serving the surrounding hinterland. For commercial and retail services, the overlapping of hub hinterlands is likely greater meaning even greater competition for attracting businesses and customers.<sup>2</sup>

Despite the weaker population and employment growth in Saint John since 2010, the Saint John CMA is performing as well (or as poorly) as Moncton, and the rest of the province in terms of GDP growth. This likely reflects the advantages Saint John has with its industrial base which includes larger, capital intensive producers of high value added products. Statistics Canada has developed estimates of Gross Domestic Product for Census Metropolitan Areas in Canada. After accounting for inflation, those GDP numbers show that Moncton, Saint John, and the rest of New Brunswick haven't grown much since 2009. But notably, Saint John's share of provincial GDP is the same now as in 2009 and still equal to Moncton's share of Provincial GDP. This may reflect the high capital intensity of exporting industries in Saint John like the refinery, and the pulp, paper and tissue mills which generate high income without being big drivers of direct employment. We should not forget, however, that employment in these exporting industries can grow if they are able to increase their market shares in export markets which will require local business conditions supporting their competitiveness. The stability of higher wage manufacturing employment in Saint John means that where Saint John is missing an opportunity to increase its

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> https://www.8citiesnb.com/uploads/8/6/6/5/86656454/richard\_saillant\_commentary.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> https://www.8citiesnb.com/uploads/8/6/6/5/86656454/don mills commentary.pdf

population and overall employment is from a lack of service sector employment growth around its heavy industry base.

The narrative of Saint John as a struggling city and region of the province is potentially misleading, particularly if its provincial peer cities are not necessarily good comparators. The reason that this matters is that if we seek information on what Saint John can do to grow and grow its tax base, then we need to make sure that we are looking better performing jurisdictions where the drivers of growth are available to Saint John. To get a better sense of how the Saint John economy is performing we took a statistical approach to identify which cities are comparators for Saint John so that we can determine which cities are performing better and which are performing worse.

The data used for our statistical cluster analysis are from Statistics Canada's 2018 Summary Characteristics of Canadian tax filers and the 2016 Census. Based on the number of taxfilers (proxies adult population), average age and median income of tax filers and area of their CMA/CA, cities were classified into 4 clusters with K-means clustering.<sup>3</sup> In addition to K-means clustering, we use hierarchical clustering to provide more insight into the structure of the clusters.<sup>4</sup>

Both of our methods of cluster analysis can be visualized in Figure 1 below. The colours of the graph are determined based on K-means clustering and the edges of the graph show the hierarchy of the clusters. Figure 1 shows that if we group cities according to characteristics of their land area, size of the taxfiling population, average age and median income, Saint John is statistically grouped with Thunder Bay, Greater Sudbury, Kingston, Guelph, Moncton, Sherbrooke, Peterborough, Belleville, Chatham-Kent and Saguenay. That group is smaller and older than

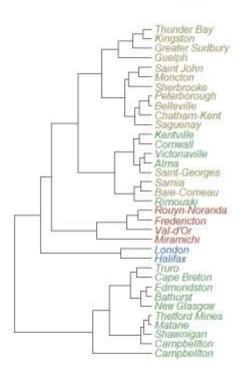
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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> K-means works by choosing K random data points as initial clusters then calculating the cluster that is closest to each data point. The centroid, or mean, of the closest data points to each initial cluster is calculated and determined to be the new location of the cluster. This process is then iterated over again until the centroids of the K clusters no longer change. In our model, the closest cluster is determined using euclidian distance and we choose the number of clusters based on the elbow method. The elbow method determines the number of clusters by calculating the ratio of the between sum-of-squares and total sum-of-squares, and looking for the "elbow", or part of the line graph where the effect of an additional cluster begins to substantially reduce the rate that the ratio is increasing with more clusters as shown in the "elbow?" graph.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Hierarchical clustering starts by treating each data point as its own cluster. It then calculates the closest data point to each cluster and calculates new centroids for the clusters, iterating this process until there is only one cluster remaining.

Halifax and London, but larger and younger than the other cities in the figure. Saint John is grouped with cities with a relatively high median income.

Figure 1



cluster colour	average number of taxfilers	average age	average median income	average land area	number of cities in cluster
blue	346,160	48.5	\$36,840	4079.4	2
yellow	95,486	50.2	\$36,346	1901.8	14
red	40,038	49.3	\$35,975	5722.0	4
green	31,157	52.3	\$29,795	1257.0	15

These clusters raise an important observation for the City of Saint John. The CMA of Saint John, the regional economy, is not lagging or struggling as it is often portrayed – at least in comparison to cities statistically like it. This matters in terms of strategies for growing an economy. For

example, Davidson (2021) identifies that northern cities in Ontario suffer from weak employment growth and lower labour force participation relative to the more prosperous cities in the South of the province that have economic influences from the growth of the GTA. Training and employment subsidy programs are longstanding approaches to improving surplus labour economies. Saint John's labour force participation and employment growth is relatively strong compared to many similar sized cities and is more likely to be suffering from labour shortages, or at least tight labour markets, that limit businesses seeking to grow. Where many jurisdictions are addressing problems of surplus population as Saint John had prior to 2010, Saint John would be better served by prioritizing population growth.

We also produced statistical clusters shown in Figure 2 using the variables for city characteristics and CMA/CA population change from 2011 to 2018 and the percentage change in median income for tax filers in the CMA/CA from 2014 to 2018. Where the previous clusters of cities were based on characteristics of the cities in 2018, these clusters are based on similarity of characteristics and recent growth performance. Even though many interpret Saint John as struggling since 2008, Saint John's growth performance separates it from Moncton but places it in comparable performance to a number of cities its size. The implication of these clusters is that there are not cities that stand out as relevant as comparators for Saint John and that are performing better in terms of economic growth based on changes in population and average income. It is hard to know which cities to look to lessons for improving the City's economic base.

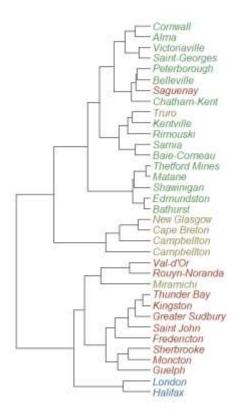
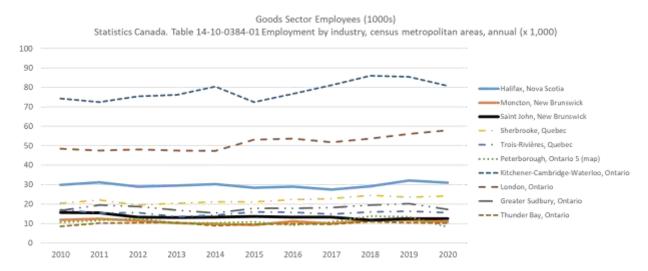


Figure 2:

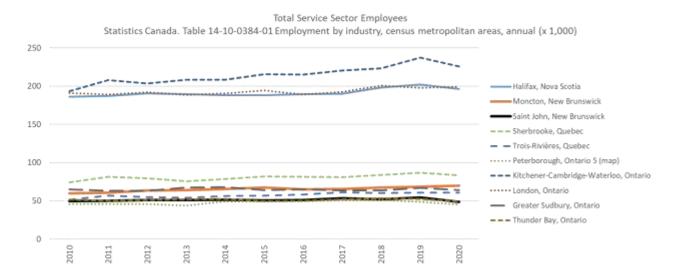
The insight from the statistical clusters for relevant comparators and the relative economic performance of Saint John are supported by trends in employment in cities since 2010. Looking at goods sector employment which includes manufacturing, Saint John and Moncton have comparable numbers for employment and the declines seen for Saint John since 2017 seem to match the gains to Moncton. But none of the smaller and medium sized cities east of Manitoba show gains in goods sector employment since 2010 other than maybe the much larger population London, Ontario and Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo, Ontario.

Figure 3:



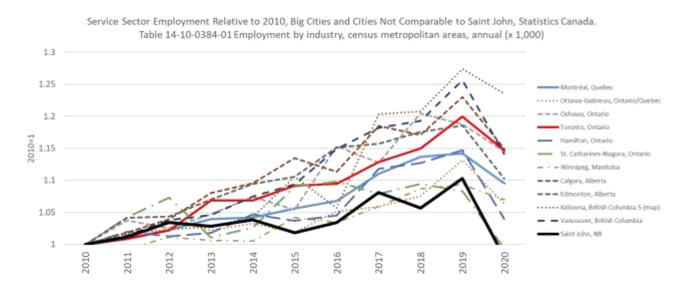
Looking at employment in the service sector, Saint John appears to be a weak generator of jobs compared to the other cities shown. Saint John's total service sector employment matches that of Peterborough and Thunder Bay but is below Moncton.

Figure 4:



Service sector employment growth has been strong in Canada's large cities and appears to be stronger among the cities in the graph that are larger. So the weak service sector employment growth seems associated with the size of Saint John rather than an under-performing economy.

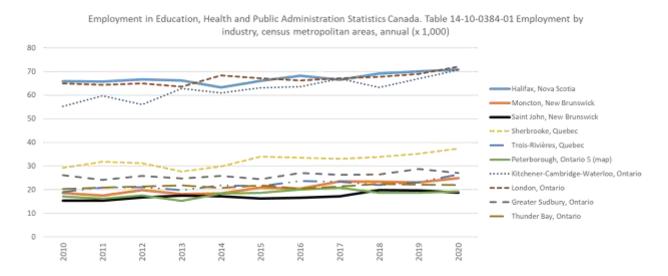
Figure 5:



Public sector employment, comprising public administration and health, has been a big driver of service sector employment growth, particularly in health for the past few decades. Since 2015, Moncton and Halifax have benefited from more growth in public sector employment than Saint John. Donald Savoie (2017, 375) argues that "one must conclude Halifax is now, even more than it was in 2010, the region's economic engine that can benefit all of the Maritimes. It is by far the region's largest urban centre, home to a marvelous port, a top-ranked university, an important naval establishment, a relatively large federal presence, a provincial government and a draw for young educated Maritimers... The challenge for the region and its private sector is to identify and pursue the numerous opportunities flowing out of ... developments in Halifax."<sup>5</sup>

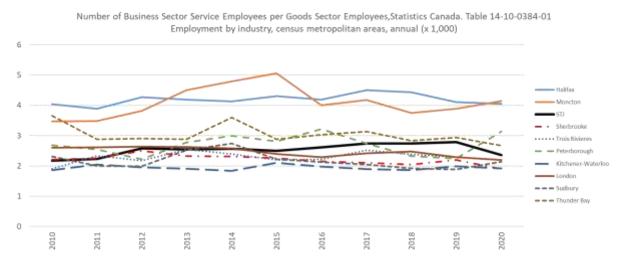
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Donald Savoie (2017) Looking for Bootstraps: Economic Development in the Maritimes, page 375.

Figure 6:



Where Saint John and other smaller cities in Canada stand out is in the much weaker generation of business sector service employment around its good producing sector (wealth creating) employment. Saint John generates just under three service sector employees for each employee in the goods producing sector where Halifax and Moncton generate four. Notice that the ratios depicted in Figure 7 are stable for all cities depicted which means that the city employment in the goods producing and service sectors are closely tied. But again, there is no obvious sign that Saint John's employment growth has been out of line with what we see in other Canadian cities to which it could be considered comparable.

Figure 7:



The emergence of dominant service centres within regions is observed across Canada. For example, since 2008, Ontario's growth has been driven by service sector employment in the GTA. Davidson (2021) observes that in rural and the north, cities have not experienced the same growth. In New Brunswick and the Maritime region generally, service sector employment has not grown while imports of services have meaning, the region is not competitive with respect to local services supplied which is a major limitation for growing the population and tax base. In the cases of Halifax and Moncton, much of their growth is arising from the consolidation of service sector employment in the region. But it is not just service sector employment that benefits these two dominant hubs. Halifax benefits today from the relocation of the Irving Shipyard from Saint John, and Moncton/Dieppe has benefited from the tissue conversion plant, cardboard box plant and warehousing for the Saint John based JDI. For the region, those cities would appear to have a competitive advantage that Saint John needs to consider when setting its own tax, spending and investment decisions.

#### Competitiveness of the city within its own region

If Saint John is underperforming economically then it is relative to its full potential with its exceptional assets like the Port, several high value added heavy industries and, head offices. To understand the opportunity for growth that is somewhat unique to Saint John relative to cities its size, consider the plans for the seaport. In 2017 Port Saint John established a goal of doubling its container throughput with port modernization. That increase would amount to 10 percent increase in total port throughput. Economists have estimated that an increase in port activity of the size expected with Port Saint John's modernization raises annual GDP in the port region by 0.01 percent to 0.03 percent but the spillover effects raise GDP in non-port regions by 0.06 percent to 0.2 percent. That means that the port region with competitive business conditions for the location has the capacity to retain a greater share of the much larger income currently benefiting the hinterland, which would boost the size of the local economy.

The wealth created for the port region will be capitalized into land values as the activity in a small open economy like the port zone largely drives extensive growth of the local economy – more population but not necessarily higher average incomes. The degree to which property values rise, and the extent of population increase around the Port in turn will be determined by the extent to which the wealth created is retained in the port region over leaking out of the port

region to economic centres competing with the port region for businesses and investment. The port region will benefit from location specific port services, and expanding demand for them. But other economic benefits generated by the port activity like non-port activities, manufacturers, services and businesses that benefit from the port location, and consumer demands in the region arising from higher population and total income can leak out of the port region.

The disproportionate GDP increase outside of the port region from the port business expansion reflects that port zones face intense competition for retaining the wealth generated by the port, and the direct benefits from port services do not generate the levels of employment that they have in the past. Containerisation and increased capital intensity of port handling systems reduced direct employment in ports. Revolutions in maritime shipping services, particularly with containerization and intermodality of transportation have broken down the historic protection against competition for ports over their hinterlands. Not only are port services facing competition from other ports, the economic hinterlands are contestable. "De-maritimisation" is a term that refers to the movement of some traditional port functions to other non-port locations—inland hubs and terminals. Finally, lower transportation costs to the port have eroded the advantage for manufacturers and other producers to locate near to the port.

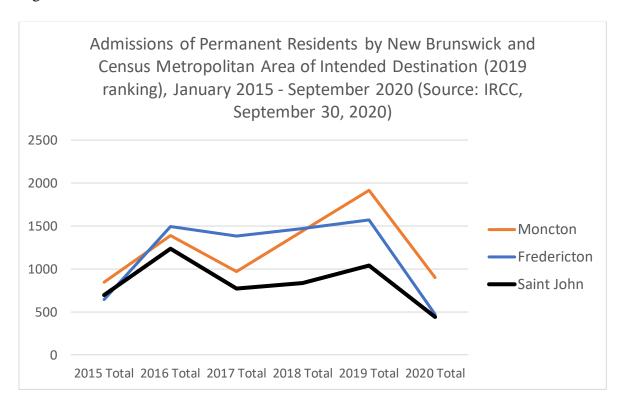
The City of Saint John faces competition for businesses to locate in the City to stimulate the regional economy, and it also faces competition for population that would support local business and create demand for residential property, particularly from its surrounding communities.

Recent work by Emery, Wang and Daigle (2019) used Census data for 2001 to 2016 to analyse interprovincial migration to and from New Brunswick and intra-provincial migration. <sup>6</sup> Census data show that residents of the CMA of Saint John are less likely to leave New Brunswick or move to other places in the province than residents of other cities like Moncton and Fredericton. In-migrants from other provinces are as likely to locate in the Saint John CMA as in Moncton CMA and Fredericton CA. Notably, the largest share of interprovincial in-migrants do not choose to live in a CMA or CA. With respect to intraprovincial migration, Saint John CMA

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Emery, J. C. H., Wang, L., & Daigle, B. (2019). The impact of official bilingualism on the geographic mobility of New Brunswickers: Evidence from 2001 to 2016. Fredericton, NB: New Brunswick Institute for Research, Data and Training.

loses population to Moncton, Fredericton and non-CMA/CA Southwest New Brunswick. In return, Saint John CMA is less of a draw to residents in other areas of the province. Immigration to the province has been increasing since 2015 but Saint John CMA is not attracting newcomers as strongly as Moncton CMA or Fredericton CA since 2016.

Figure 8:

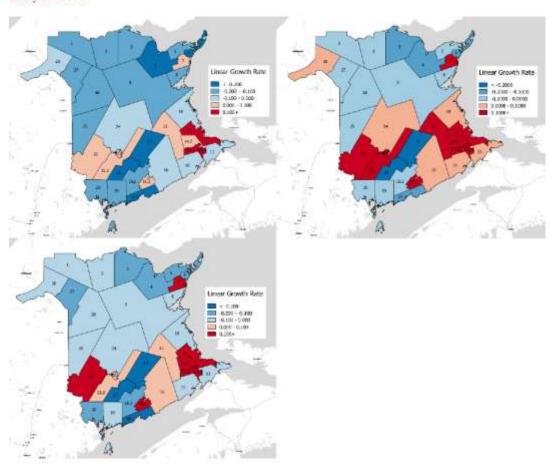


Population growth forecasts from the New Brunswick Institute for Research Data and Training showed a remarkable contrast between the City of Saint John and its surrounding communities if current population growth trends continue. The CMA for Saint John would see population growth but unless overall population growth to the province was high, the population increases are all expected outside of the City of Saint John.

Figure 9:

# Appendix C: Maps for selected geographies of constrained population change by Statistics Canada scenario

Map 10: Linear Growth Rate for Health Council Communities under low growth scenario (top left), high growth scenario (right), and M1 growth scenario (bottom left); base period 2011-2016, end year 2036.

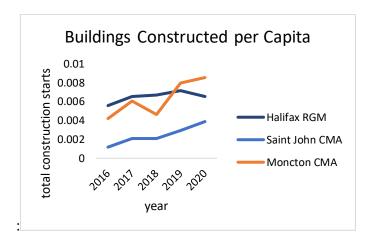


SOURCE: Balzer, A., Peters, P. (2018). Small-Area Population Forecasts for New Brunswick with 2016 Census Data: Cohort-Component Model Report (Report No. 2018-03). Fredericton, NB: New Brunswick Institute for Research, Data and Training (NB-IRDT).

#### Residential Construction in Saint John and Comparator Cities

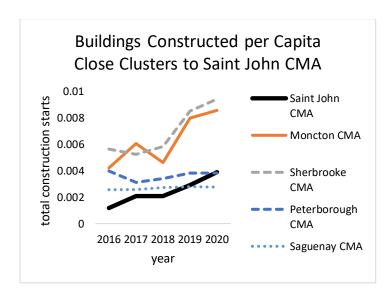
CMHC provides data on residential housing starts for CMAs in Canada and housing starts are a useful indicator for tax base growth.<sup>7</sup> Saint John CMA shows a low number of residential building construction starts per capita compared to Halifax CMA and Moncton CMA which is not surprising given the weaker population growth of Saint John.

Figure 10:



Saint John's level of residential construction starts is not out of line with other cities its size like Peterborough.

Figure 11:



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> The population data were <u>Population estimates</u>, <u>July 1</u>, <u>by census subdivision</u>, <u>2016 boundaries</u>. The housing construction activity data came from CMHC's page on <u>Housing Market Data</u>.

Looking at more disaggregated numbers within CMAs, prior to 2018 the City of Saint John had little residential construction and what was driving the CMA level increase was construction in Quispamsis and Rothesay. This contrast with Moncton CMA where overall residential housing starts per capita match those of Halifax CMA and where Moncton City, Dieppe and Riverview all show increases in residential construction. Unlike Moncton the residential construction is disproportionately outside of the City of Saint John.

Figure 12:

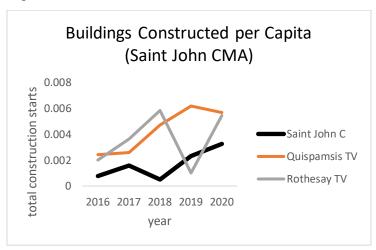
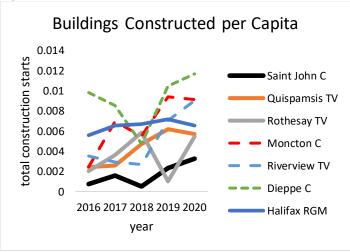


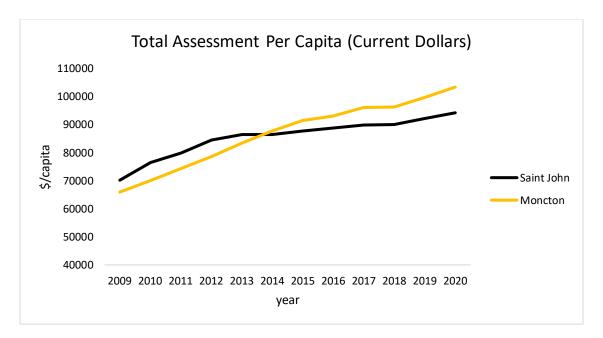
Figure 13:



# Is there anything about the City's Taxation, Spending and Fiscal Management that is hurting the City's competitiveness for attracting residents and service businesses?

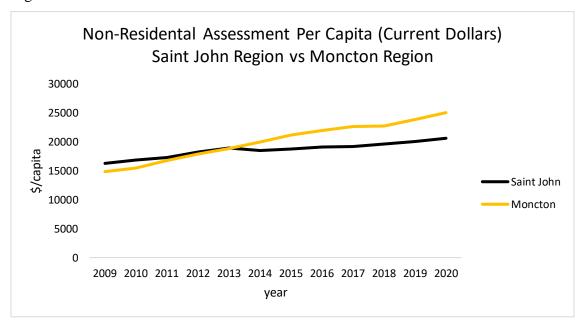
At the level of a CMA, Saint John generated higher per capita assessment than Moncton as late 2013. After 2013, Saint John assessment per capita stagnated where Moncton's continued to grow.

Figure 14:



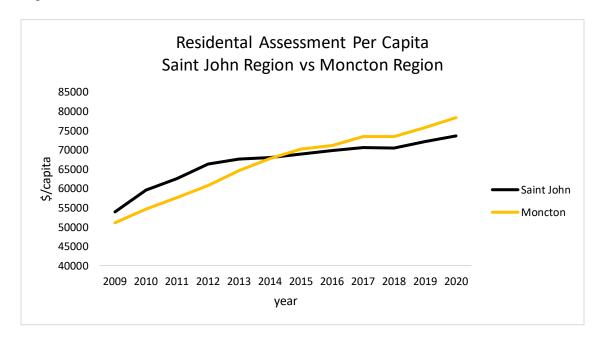
Saint John's non-residential assessment per capita has not changed much since 2009 and has likely fallen in purchasing power adjusted terms whereas Moncton has seen steady growth.

Figure 15:



Residential assessment per capita in Saint John were increasing to 2013 after which time they stopped growing. Moncton's assessment per capita continued to grow.

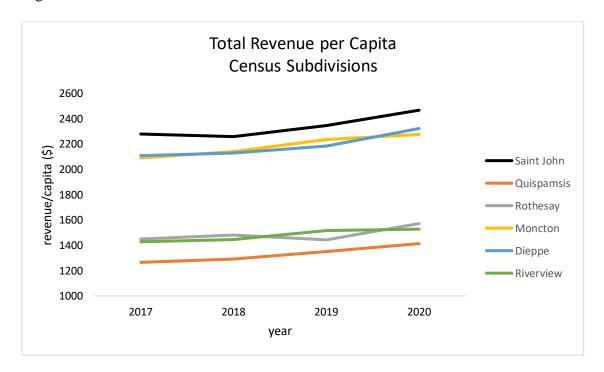
Figure 16:



Looking at jurisdictions within CMAs, it is interesting to note that when considering all revenues, rather than the assessment values, including transfers from the Province, the City of

Saint John has high per capita revenues, higher than the Cities of Moncton and Dieppe and much higher than Rothesay and Quispamsis.<sup>8</sup>

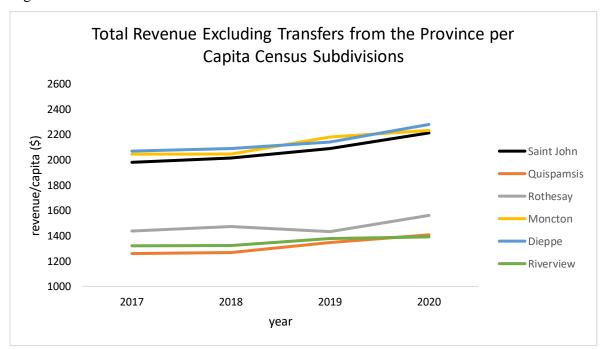
Figure 17:



When we consider all revenues excluding the transfers from the Province, Saint John has lower per capita revenues but they are not dramatically out of line with Moncton or Dieppe. Only Riverview, part of Moncton CMA, changes without the provincial transfers included.

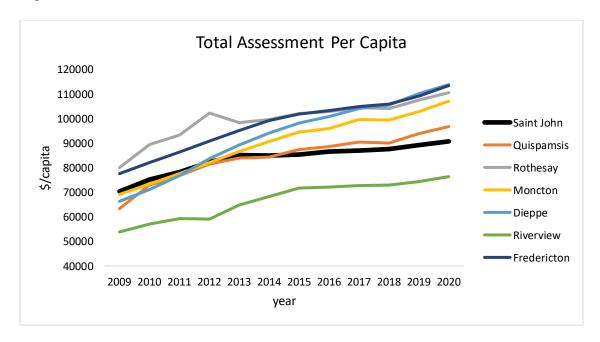
<sup>8</sup> A comparison of the level of transfers in the various municipalities being compared is in Table 3 below.

Figure 18:



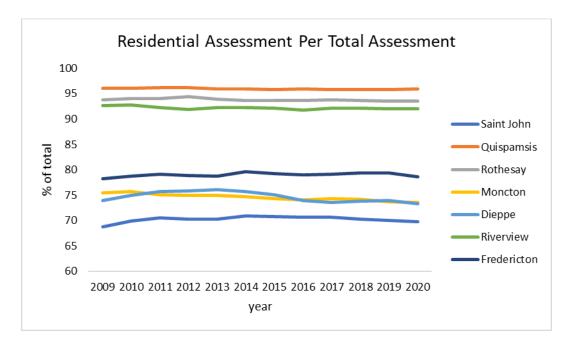
With respect to property tax assessment, the City of Saint John has not seen the growth in per capita assessment values that other cities have, including Rothesay and Quispamsis.

Figure 19:



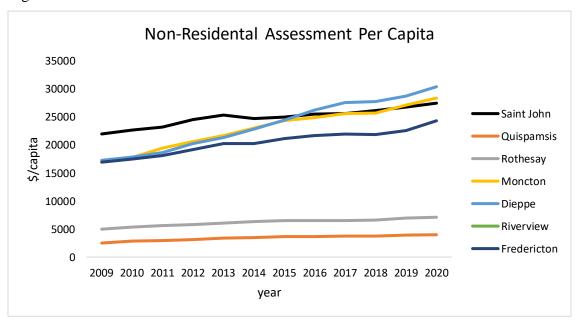
The City of Saint John has a high reliance on non-residential property tax for its revenues compared to other cities in the south of the Province.

Figure 20:



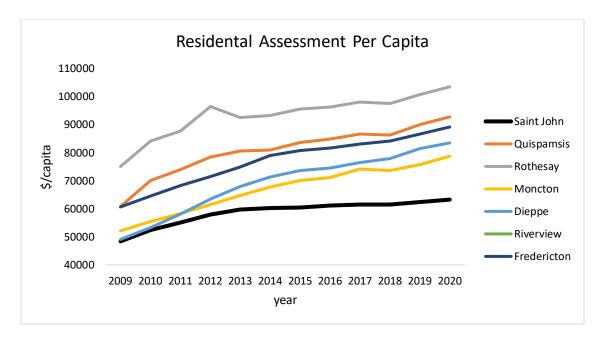
The City of Saint John has had a high and stable level of non-residential assessment per capita and only since 2015 has Dieppe surpassed Saint John. These trends reflect the rise of businesses locating in Moncton CMA as it emerges as the province's business hub. The City of Saint John appears to not be maintaining its competitiveness as a location for business.

Figure 21:



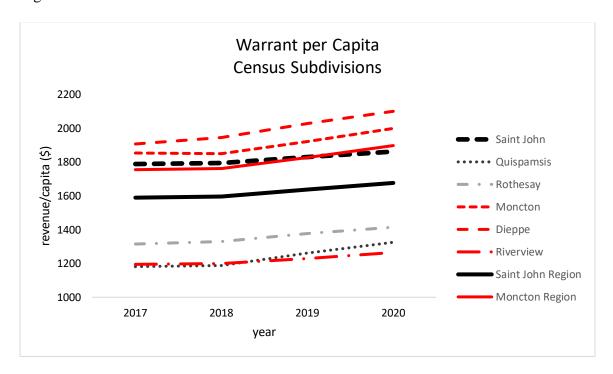
Where the City of Saint John lags other cities is in its residential assessment per capita. Rothesay and Quispamsis showing growing revenue from residential property tax like Moncton and Dieppe. Population growth in the Saint John CMA driven by jobs created in the City of Saint John is generating demand for housing outside of the City leading to stagnation in the city's property tax base.

Figure 22a:



The Saint John regional average per capita tax revenue falls below the City average per capita due to the weight of Quispamsis and Rothesay with lower tax rates than Saint John. It would seem that the regional average for Moncton is being affected by the comparable growth in residential assessment and taxation efforts in both Moncton and Dieppe. In contrast, the much stronger growth in residential assessment in Quispamsis and Rothesay compared to Saint John results in lower residential property tax revenue collected in the Saint John region given the lower tax rates of the communities outside of Saint John.

Figure 22b:



On the surface the City of Saint John is not lacking revenue compared to other cities so the challenges must be the result of expenditures and the lack of revenue growth to offset inflation. Looking at per capita expenditure by function in 2020, the City of Saint stands out in terms of high expenditures on police and fire services, and transportation and in terms of low spending on recreation and culture. Debt service costs are not out of line with other cities on a per capita basis but we add context for the City's debt challenges below. In comparison to 2014, the distribution of the City of Saint John's spending by category has not changed a great deal and the rise in spending in each category is not out of line with the increases in other New Brunswick cities.

Figure 23:

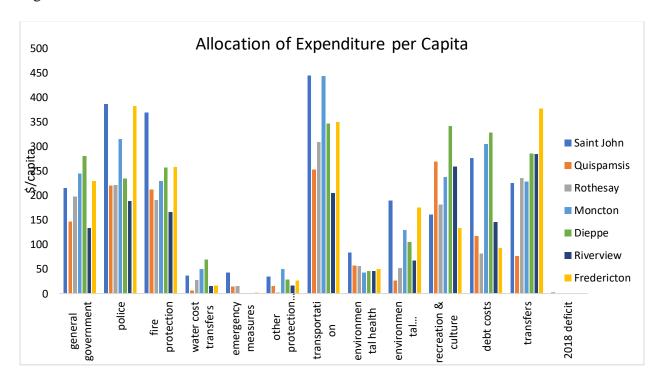
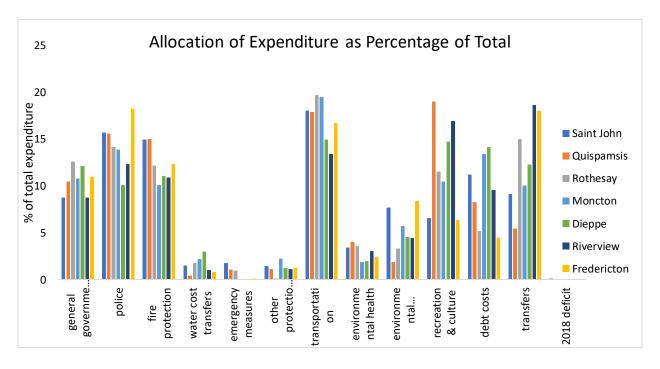


Figure 24:



For a slightly different perspective on expenditure, we constructed per capita spending and spending shares by category for the combined City of Saint John, Quispamsis and Rothesay, and the combined Moncton City, Dieppe and Riverview. Overall, per capita spending is 2% (\$40) higher in the Moncton CMA than in the Saint John CMA in 2020. So the main differences between the Moncton CMA and Saint John CMA is how, or on what, the cities spend. The high spending in the City of Saint John on police and fire protection results in higher spending for the amalgam of communities compared to the Moncton CMA. Moncton has higher spending on general government, debt costs, transfers and recreation and culture. Overall, the Saint John communities allocate 5% more of their total spending to police and fire protection which is offset by lower spending on general government, recreation and culture, debt costs and transfers.

Figure 25:

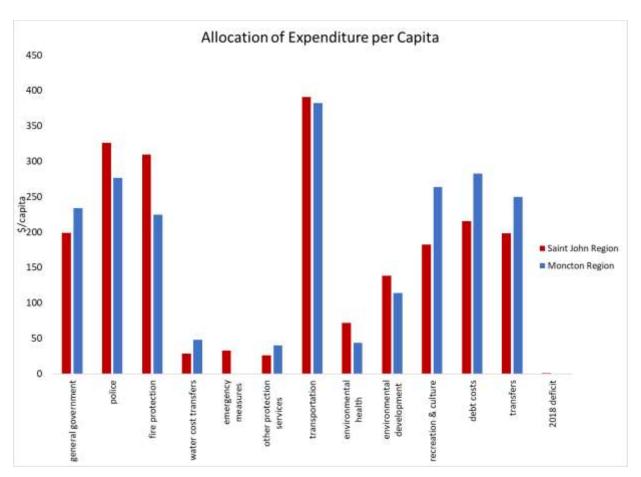
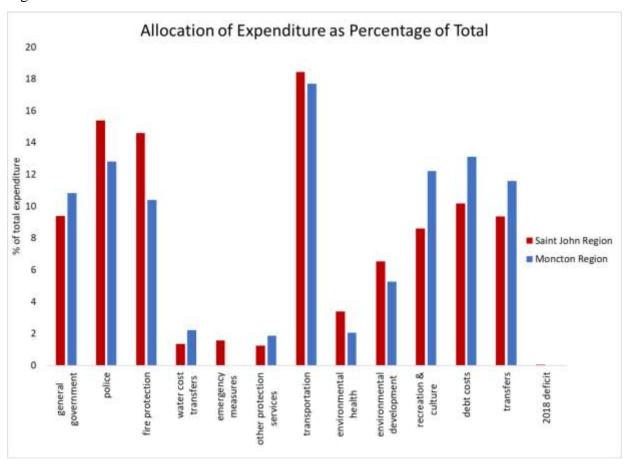


Figure 26:



There is a strong consensus view that municipal financial management is a key underpinning of the municipal capacity to attract economic development and to retain businesses and a residential population. Citizens care about the fiscal health of their city for a variety of reasons: possible disruptions or reductions in the level of services precipitated by economic shocks; local governments care about meeting expenditure commitments without unduly burdening local residents and businesses and affecting the competitiveness of the local economy; and provinces care because municipal fiscal difficulties have the potential to pose difficult accountability issues for them as well. (Bird and Slack 2015)

Evidence of strong financial management or of potential areas of weakness that should be addressed from both an operational as well as a strategic planning perspective are contained in the following suggested indicators of municipal financial condition. Concerns have been expressed in a recent review of the operations of the City of Saint John commissioned by the Department of the Environment and Local Government (ELG) of the Province by Ernst and

Young (EY 2020). In general, the EY 2020 report notes the threat posed by expenditure growth driven by "wage pressures, shrinkage in the tax base, reliance on debt to fund day to day operations, aging infrastructure and the need to build reserve funds to meet contingencies and unfunded future liabilities" (EY 2020, 6). This combination is at least suggestive of issues worthy of more in depth analysis than is possible in this study or that provided by EY.

Financial condition refers to the ability of a municipality to meet all of its existing financial obligations.<sup>9</sup> Table 1 contains a summary of the basic concepts used to assess the financial conditions of local governments (Bird 2015). These concepts are useful in guiding decision-makers on maintaining the fiscal performance of a municipality.

**Table 1: Assessing the Financial Condition of Local Governments** 

Solvency Concept	Definition	Objective	Determinants
Cash	Cash flow solvency	Pay the bills	Fiscal shocks
			Fiscal slack (unused
			capacity)
Budgetary	Balance in fiscal year	Meet financial	Extent of risk
		Obligations	Extent of fiscal slack
Service level	Balance between near-term	Provide adequate	Political constraints
	obligations, actual spending,	services to meet	Vulnerability to shocks
	and revenues collected	needs	
Long-run	Balance in long run	Meet all	Economic conditions
	between available	obligations	Institutional
	revenues and	both financial and	constraints
	spending needs	service level	Long-term liabilities,
			assets
			Risk, uncertainty

More specifically, in the Canadian context, governments rely on the Public Sector Accounting Board (PSAB) to provide guidelines and definitions related to financial management. PSAB describes three different but interrelated characteristics of the fiscal condition of governments: sustainability, flexibility and vulnerability. <sup>10</sup>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> This section draws on Tassonyi (2017, 8-9) and Bird (2015).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> The Public Sector Accounting Board is a board of the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants. In general municipal accounts must conform to the general accounting principles established by PSAB.

Sustainability is the degree to which a government can maintain its existing financial obligations with respect to service commitments to the public and its financial commitments to creditors and employees without increasing the relative tax and debt burdens in the economy. <sup>11</sup> Perennial operating deficits or a trend of an increasing share of debt charges in current revenues suggest an unsustainable fiscal condition. For local governments, the ratio of outstanding debt to annual revenue provides an indication of the future revenue that may be encumbered to finance past spending. <sup>12</sup>

Flexibility or revenue capacity is the degree to which a government can increase the relative levels of debt or taxes to meet existing financial obligations both in respect of its service commitments to the public and financial commitments to creditors, employees, and others. For local governments, the ratio of public debt charges (debt service) to own-source revenues is an indicator of flexibility in spending. An increase in this indicator over an extended period of time during a period of relatively stable interest rates means that the government has consistently chosen borrowing over increases in taxation or user fees to meet its financial and service commitments. Increasing borrowing will eventually affect flexibility, assuming that debt service takes priority over other mandatory expenditure commitments. Flexibility is also captured by the debt to assessment ratio as a rise in this ratio impairs municipal fiscal capacity either through a reduction in the tax base or an increase in mandatory expenditure resulting from increased indebtedness. With respect to taxes, the ratio of own-source revenues to taxable assessment is commonly used. A change in taxable assessment or its growth rate relative to own-source revenues could influence a municipality's flexibility (PSAB 2007). 15

Lastly, the degree of *vulnerability* of a local government can be a function of either transfer dependency or the risks created by exogenous shocks that impact its tax base. Transfer

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> PSAB (2007, 6).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> PSAB (2007, 10).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> PSAB (2007, 11).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> "Failing to do so would impair its future ability to borrow or to roll over its existing debt." (PSAB, 2007, 11). Also sub-national governments do not control monetary policy, precluding using inflation as an alternative to debt service.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Although household income may be a better measure of flexibility, the data are not generally available on an annual basis.

dependency is usually measured by the ratio of transfers to total revenues. The PSAB approach is summarized in the following table.

**Table 2: The PSAB Approach** 

Concept	Definition	Possible Indicators
Sustainability	Ability to maintain existing programs and services and meet financial obligations without increasing debt or taxes.	Ratio of outstanding debt to annual revenue Ratio of financial assets to liabilities.
Flexibility	Ability to increase debt or taxes	Ratio of debt service cost to revenues Ratio of debt to assessment Ratio of own-source revenues to assessment Effective tax rate
Vulnerability	Risks (transfers, external shocks)	Ratio of transfers to total revenues Proportion of population on general welfare

A similar approach is taken by the Nova Scotia Fiscal Conditions model.



The FCIs model was developed by the NSDMAH in collaboration with both the Federation of Nova Scotia Municipalities and the Association of Municipal Administrators [of] Nova Scotia. By sharing the model's results with municipalities, the NSDMAH aims to help municipalities identify foreseeable risks and trends, recognize potential vulnerabilities, and understand their ability to meet future obligations.

The model condenses 13 financial indicators into a single graphic of a "House". The NSDMAH calculates a level of risk (low, moderate or high) for each indicator giving special consideration to the debt service charges ratio when assessing a municipality's borrowing resolutions.

The Nova Scotia model reflects a thorough examination of municipal fiscal data. The graphs in the preceding section of this paper show some of the trends of the foundation of the "House". In particular, residential tax effort and the change in time in the assessment base is graphically illustrated. Calculating the other items in the House is to some extent addressed in the EY review for the City of Saint John and should be given consideration in the development of the strategic plan.

The following table shows data for Saint John, Moncton and their surrounding municipalities using the PSAB conceptual framework:

Table 3 Selected Fiscal Indicators for New Brunswick Municipalities

2019	Debt cost/ Own	Debt/	Debt/	Warrant/ Total	CommEq/	Transfers/	Oth.Rev/ Total
	Source	Assmt.	Tax	Rev.	Total Rev.	Total Rev.	Rev.
	Rev.						
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Fredericton	5.0	0.06	41.8	85.8	1.5	4.3	9.9
Moncton	14.2	0.22	136.1	86.0	2.4	4.5	9.6
Saint John	14.4	0.34	189.2	77.9	10.9	16.3	5.8
Dieppe	15.4	0.27	164.9	92.9	1.9	2.5	4.6
Quispamsis	8.5	0.14	106.4	93.4	0.4	0.8	5.8
Riverview	10.5	0.16	97.9	81.1	9.0	10.8	8.0
Rothesay	7.4	0.13	100.9	95.4	0.7	1.2	3.4
Grand Bay-							
Westfield	5.6	0.08	61.9	80.5	9.5	13.7	5.8

A quick review shows that the fiscal performance of Saint John shows signs of weakness. This is particularly the case for the debt-related indicators. While Moncton and Saint John and are close to each other at around 14 per cent, this level of mandatory expenditure is a limitation on flexibility. By comparison, the overall average in Ontario is 6.8 per cent and in comparable

municipalities shown in the next table varies from 0.5 to 10.5 per cent <sup>16</sup>while Halifax as a debt cost (service) to own source revenues of 8.3 per cent. This suggests that debt cost is a significant constraint on budgetary flexibility in Saint John relative to other cities.

The ratio of long -term debt to taxable assessment is also considered to be indicative of flexibility. In this case, at 0.34 per cent, this ratio is one-third higher than that of Moncton and twice that of the suburban municipalities under consideration. <sup>17</sup> By comparison, the Ontario average is 0.8 per cent. The corresponding ratios for a selection of Ontario municipalities is shown below. These vary around the provincial average. Again, the relative burden of debt in Saint John by comparison is high compared to its provincial competitors.

The level of the ratio of debt to annual taxes which is an indicator of sustainability from a financial perspective is more concerning. This ratio at 189% is significantly higher than the other New Brunswick municipalities shown here. By contrast since 2009, the average ratio in Ontario has averaged at 96 per cent, while that of Halifax in 2019 was 33.5 per cent. Furthermore, the level of transfer dependency of the City of Saint John is an indication of vulnerability in contrast to its neighbours and other cities its size.

The following table shows the debt indicators for selected smaller Ontario municipalities that have had similar challenges to their economies.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> (https://efis.fma.csc.gov.on.ca/fir/Provincial%20Multi%20Year.htm) is the website for Ontario municipal data used in this section of the paper.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> While the indicators for Dieppe may be cause for concern, there may be extenuating circumstances given recent growth and pressure to invest in infrastructure.

**Table 4 Selected Fiscal Indicators for Selected Ontario Municipalities** 

	Debt cost/	Debt/		Debt/
	Own Source	Assmt		Tax
	Rev.			
	%	%		%
Belleville	6.6		1.5	100.0
ChathamKent	10.5		0.7	42.7
Guelph	4.5		0.5	46.6
Kingston	7.3		1.7	142.9
London	7.0		0.6	48.1
Peterborough	0.5		0.0	8.7
Sudbury	2.0		0.3	24.9
Thunder Bay	5.9		1.6	109.6
Ontario				
Average	6.8		8.0	102.4
Halifax	8.3		0.6	33.5
Saint John	14.4	(	0.34	189.2

As has been pointed out in the EY report, the current circumstances are unlikely to be sustainable in the long run.

# What Can the City of Saint John do to Grow its Tax Base? Or How Can it Grow Its Employment and Population?

#### a) Improve Saint John's Reputation

Negativity around Saint John's economy and municipal fiscal health is killing business confidence, and likely investment, in the City. Kevin Hassett, a recent chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers in the U.S. asked "Why is it that places filled with talented folks, you know, smart, talented folks..." like Saint John, "can suddenly hit this equilibrium where everybody — most everybody's leaving, no businesses want to be there?" His answer is that expectations matter.

Nobel Laureate John Nash was famous for describing situations where we can get socially and economically stuck when people make decisions in their best interests given what they see, or expect, are the choices of others. So in a good equilibrium, everybody is going to a place like

Moncton because people perceive that is where others want to go and they want to get there before everyone else does.

In a bad equilibrium, like Saint John seems to be suffering from, nobody is rushing in or investing because no one thinks that anyone else is going to. Public fighting between the City and Province creates perceptions that Saint John is not the place to be compared to other places where there are no dire warnings by the Mayor or ultimatums from the Province. Bad news with respect to the airport losing its Air Canada services indefinitely and another suspension of a cruise ship season for 2021 contribute to a perception that Saint John may continue to struggle.

Hassett asked "What drives one place into a bad equilibrium rather than the good equilibrium? And, more importantly, what can be done to flip from a bad situation to a good situation?" Many New Brunswickers likely remember the "McKenna Miracle" as New Brunswick bucked the broader regional economic malaise and became known as a happening place. More often than not, the Miracle was attributed to the attitudinal shift spurred by Premier McKenna. Last year Saint John Chamber of Commerce CEO David Duplisea called for an end to the public fighting between the City and Province that could be the start of a tipping from the bad equilibrium where Saint John's problems are compounded by expectations that there will be on-going problems, to one of better times from ending the cycle of negativity. More recently, the re-commitment of local governments in the Saint John region to cooperate through the New Regional Economic Development Agency for Greater Saint John 18 also signals a shift in attitude.

Saint John, City is not a place that currently has a high (external) reputation as a place to live or do business, or at least not as good a reputation as other cities and places in the region, including Rothesay and Quispamsis. In 2018, MoneySense ranked places in Canada according to a broad index of characteristics. Saint John ranked 381 out of 415 places considered, and was generally not within reach of the rankings for cities we have identified as comparators for Saint John. These rankings speak less to the reality of Saint John's economy and livability but more to the perceptions of the City and its reputation. For persons looking to move and work in the Saint

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> The Agency represents the interests of the communities of Grand Bay-Westfield, Saint John, Rothesay, Quispamsis, and St. Martins

John region, or choosing between Moncton region and Saint John, these rankings can give an edge to better reputation communities.

Generally, MoneySense's rankings did not have high scores for places in in Atlantic Canada, with the bottom 25 cities in the 2018 cross-country ranking including 15 cities from Atlantic Canada. MoneySense summarized that despite the positives of the region like affordable housing, the region's challenges relative to the rest of Canada with low incomes and high unemployment kept Atlantic Canada cities out of the top half of the ranking of the best places to live in Canada. Halifax, the top-rated east coast city was ranked in 226th place and scored in the top 25 per cent of all cities in the commute and amenities categories. MoneySense found Halifax to be among the top 60 cities for the percentage of its population that walks or cycles to work. The cities in the Atlantic region ranked lower based on the weather category as the is "Known for its torrential rain and snow storms, Halifax is near the bottom for the number of days with rain and the number of days above 20C you can expect in a year."

(https://www.moneysense.ca/spend/real-estate/best-places-to-live-canada-atlantic-2018/)

But even within the region, Saint John ranked 17th behind Bathurst (13th), Miramichi (15th) and Edmundston (16th). With Halifax ranked first for the Atlantic region, Dieppe was second ranked, Fredericton 4th, Moncton (city) 5th, Riverview 6th, Rothesay 7th, and Quispamsis 9th. New Brunswick places dominate the top 10 places to live in Atlantic Canada which other than cities listed already only has St. John's in 3rd and Charlottetown in 8th.

(https://www.moneysense.ca/canadas-best-places-to-live-2018-create-your-own-ranking/#region-ac)

With the pandemic highlighting the opportunities for cities in New Brunswick to attract population based on opportunities for people to work from home, PCMag developed a ranking of "The Best Work-From-Home Cities for 2021" (https://www.pcmag.com/news/the-best-work-from-home-cities-for-2021) The rankings were based on two equally weighted categories, affordability and livability. The affordability score included median home value and the minimum cost for gigabit broadband, while livability accounted for the median home size, percentage of home-based workers in the community, the attractiveness of the city, and the presence of local amenities such as coffee shops and restaurants. What is important for the City of Saint John to recognize with how communities are evaluated is that PCMag's evaluation was

biased in favor of suburban areas around major centers. Suburban areas rank high because of lower real estate prices than in Canada's larger cities and in Atlantic Canada, the availability of Bell's superior 1.5Gbps Fibe Internet.

PCMag ranked Dieppe 2nd in Canada, and Quispamsis 4th, in terms of working from home. Dieppe's advantages were noted to be its proximity to the City of Moncton, its Francophone identity, downtown restaurants, parks, green spaces, and its growing business and residential area. 19 Quispamsis' high ranking by PCMag amplified its recent ranking by MoneySense as the best place to live in Atlantic Canada. Noting that Quispamsis was "named the "best place to live in Atlantic Canada" by MoneySense, Quispamsis offers plenty of parks, good schools, and small businesses. It's a prominent suburb of Saint John, which offers a plethora of historical and cultural sites. Quispamsis is particularly attractive to older residents, for whom it hosts a number of community programs and wellness initiatives. And housing is very affordable: 89% of residents pay less than 30% of their income for their homes." The City of Saint John is in a perplexing situation. It is recognized as an important business centre with regional amenities but that reputation benefits the surrounding suburbs' reputations as places to live, but not the City itself. PCMag highlighted Quispamsis's "parks, good schools, affordable housing, small businesses, and cultural sites. PCMag also highlighted Quispamsis' community programs and wellness initiatives and its proximity to Saint John."

## b) ADDRESS THE CITY'S Fiscal Health/Fiscal Performance: Sustainability, Flexibility, Vulnerability

Perceptions of the City's budget challenges, and public battles over how to address the City's budget have likely undermined the City's appeal to prospective residents and its reputation more widely. Demonstrated planning and progress toward addressing the challenges to signal reduced fiscal vulnerability, greater flexibility for making investments and supporting programs and generally confidence in the City's fiscal sustainability would help the City attract, and retain, business and population.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> (https://huddle.today/dieppe-quispamsis-and-halifax-lead-list-of-canadian-places-to-work-fromhome/?utm\_source=rss&utm\_medium=rss&utm\_campaign=dieppe-quispamsis-and-halifax-lead-list-of-canadianplaces-to-work-from-home&ct=t(RSS\_EMAIL\_CAMPAIGN)

#### c) Building A Pyramid to Support Local Economic Development

Providing the services efficiently and effectively at the local level that provide the basis for the development and growth of a diversified and sustainable tax base is a challenge faced by mature municipalities. As such, policy must be based on an understanding of providing competitive and effective levels of mandated municipal services such as policing and fire prevention as well as a recognition of existing deficiencies in the municipal capital structure that need to be overcome both in the short and long term. Various aspects of the policy framework include the alignment of taxing/spending initiatives that take the criteria of growing the tax base into consideration and the use of limited funds for strategic investments to deal with aging infrastructure and in the provision of additional capacity across a broad spectrum of services that can accommodate growth. The alignment of fiscal priorities should be predicated on the notion of removing constraints to economic development posed by the uneven provision of infrastructure capacity, including environmental and social and human services. The City also faces the constraints posed by the legislative framework governing taxing and spending decisions. Many of the challenges and the possibilities for possible consideration are laid out in the EY 2020 review.

Competitive expenditure policy and service provision depends on breaking down silos among operational departments and introducing performance management systems for operations and asset management systems for infrastructure assets. Similar initiatives are underway in other provinces in a staged manner.<sup>20</sup> The City should take the initiative and implement city and agencies including utility operations wide policies related to asset management, performance management and where appropriate "state of good repair" policies and measurements in order to enhance the competitive environment.

#### d) Cost -Sharing with Neighbouring Municipalities

In the discussions around municipal reform the City of Saint John, like many cities in its situation, argue that it bears a disproportionate cost burden for infrastructure and municipal

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> For example, the Ontario *Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2015* (IFJPA) established a statutory obligation for broader public sector entities as defined in the regulation to prepare asset management plans. O. Reg. 588/17 (Asset Management Planning for Municipal Infrastructure under IFJPA) details requirements for municipalities. The regulation mandates a staged implementation of municipal asset management planning starting with the preparation of a strategic policy to have taken place by mid-2019 and ending in the preparation of a plan covering all infrastructure assets by 2024.

services for business and industry compared to more residential suburbs. Arguments in favor of municipal amalgamation are often presented as ensuring a fair distribution of costs across residents in the region. Our review suggests a different reason for cost-sharing, or perhaps more appropriately, revenue sharing between the surrounding communities and the City of Saint John. As we have shown, and as reflected in rankings of livable places in Canada, the City of Saint John's businesses and industries generate considerable economic value for the region, much of which is captured outside of the City. Recognizing these positive spillovers means that if the City lacks the fiscal capacity to fully capitalize on encouraging businesses to grow, then that limitation impacts the surrounding communities' growth as well. With positive spillovers, there could be a tax increment assessed on properties outside of the City to improve the City's fiscal capacity to grow the regional business sector. In short, this is not the typical fair share of cost case, it an efficiency argument based on the need for a corrective "Pigouvian Tax" to support the optimal business conditions for the regional economy which are disproportionately influenced by the fiscal health of the City of Saint John.

An example of the problems for the region's economy arising from the City's fiscal challenges has emerged with proposals to have the City either retain more of the provincial property tax levied on industry in the City, or for the City to collect more tax from industry by changing the assessed values of industrial properties with measures like including machinery and equipment in the tax base. There was also a proposal to tax trucks travelling on City streets to recoup more of the cost burden for infrastructure and services that the City attributed to heavy industry. These policies are not in the interest of the broader CMA region since they reduce the competitiveness of exporting industries in the City and likely discourage other businesses from locating in the City, and likely the region. Found and Tomlinson (2016) showed that Saint John's combined municipal and provincial property results in the City having among the highest taxes on capital among Canadian cities. As capital is mobile, this tax burden on capital would be expected to discourage footloose businesses from locating in the City reducing regional GDP.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> For services that are being provided the City to residents of other municipalities, rational cost-sharing mechanisms like greater reliance on user fees should be developed. Where fees to non-residents are not feasible, a strategic and fair approach such as that being suggested could be developed and given appropriate sanction by the Province.

Left to its own initiatives to address its fiscal challenges, the City of Saint John has sought to shift more tax burden to industry to provide a fairer level of taxation for residential property. There is no objective criteria for evaluating tax fairness across residential and non-residential property tax bases. Kitchen and Slack in their report for the City of Saint John wrote "while there is no clear answer to the question about the appropriate relationship between non-residential and residential property taxes, three principles of taxation -- equity based on benefits received from local services, accountability, and efficiency -- suggest that non-residential properties should be taxed less than residential properties." (page 39) Kitchen and Slack also wrote: "The role of property taxes is to pay for services and not redistribute income" (page 8) and "there is no justification for a higher tax on business because business properties use fewer services than residential properties and they are more likely to move in response to a tax increase." (page 4)

According to Kitchen and Slack, if we ignore the provincial property tax paid by commercial and industrial properties, the ratio of municipal non-residential (commercial/industrial) to residential property taxes in Saint John and all of New Brunswick is 1.5 which is lower than other comparator municipalities in Canada that they considered. (page 29) But when provincial paid taxes paid by business are considered, New Brunswick and Saint John does not have a low ratio. The CD Howe Institute has identified that business property taxes in New Brunswick render an otherwise competitive corporate income tax rate into a high tax burden on capital relative to other provinces. Found and Tomlinson (2016, 2018)

In summary, the interests of residents of the Saint John economic region are in reducing the overall level of taxation on businesses in the City of Saint John. If the City is pushed to raising the tax rates for industry and business then it reduces the wealth of the broader region.

Determining an appropriate tax increment collected from properties outside of the City that reflects the positive externality in tax property tax base of surrounding communities would provide a solution which benefits the wider region. <sup>22</sup>

Greater Toronto Area.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> This proposal is in its essence not dissimilar to cost- sharing that has existed in other metropolitan areas. For example, as part of the restructuring of provincial- municipal fiscal arrangements in the late 1990's and up to the middle of the next decade, the regional municipalities neighbouring the City of Toronto were required to share in the costs of social assistance and social housing in the City through a formula based on assessment in the whole of the

<sup>(</sup>https://www.celos.ca/wiki/uploads/FinancialDocumentation/2005\_br\_cns\_ssgt aequalization.pdf)

#### e) A Strategic Approach to Property Taxation Issues

Debate on the merits and the defects of property tax systems has been a consequence of the use of this form of taxation since its inception. However, while there is a broad consensus view on its appropriateness for the financing of local services, there is considerable debate around the appropriate methods of assessment including valuation and classification to be used to define the tax base and the appropriate framework and the extent of local flexibility for rate setting. It is noteworthy that while the EY report is striking in its recommendations to the City administration with respect financial management, the recommendation on the issue of systemic issues in property taxation puts the onus on a Provincial review.

Drawing upon Ontario experience with a reform of the property tax system, it is necessary to recognize the issues that precipitated the difficult political decisions to undertake the reform. It was clear that the assessment base was riddled with inconsistencies in the treatment of properties within a class and within municipal jurisdictions. The combination of assessment inequities and embedded overassessment of non-residential property compared to residential property and inflexible split mill rates had resulted in large differences in effective tax rates among various types of property to the detriment of all business properties and especially large industrial complexes as well as multi-residential buildings and new residential growth within existing cities where reassessments had not taken place. Consequently, large parts of the base were under appeal and businesses were leaving central and industrially based municipalities for other jurisdictions where the effective tax rate (taxes being imposed divided by market value) and the tax burden was lower.

Essentially, the policy framework that was created in 1998 and adjusted almost annually since has consistently shifted the relative tax burden from businesses to residences in order to reduce the most egregious imbalances over time. This was accomplished by limiting rate changes so that the relative burden among classes could not be widened. Further, taxes could not be increased on any class of property where the relative tax burden was more than the provincial threshold. Some of these restrictions have been relaxed as the relative burden on business properties has fallen since 1998. (Kitchen and Tassonyi 2012 9:18)

Policy decisions throughout the reform process had to cope with transitional issues which continue. However, the principal goals of creating a consistent assessment base, a significant

reduction in the relative tax burden on businesses and a tax rate structure with some flexibility afforded to municipalities has been accomplished. (Bird, Slack and Tassonyi, 2012, Kitchen and Tassonyi 2012 and Smart, 2012) However, questions continue to be raised and some of these may be relevant for consideration in further discussion around the existing design of the property tax system. Broadly similar questions and issues have also been raised by the Financial Task Force of the City of Calgary.

For example, the configuration of the assessment base is a matter of policy definition and practicality. There may be a rationale for using differential tax treatment to encourage the development of vacant land and to create equitable treatment of properties that are similar from an assessment perspective. Bird, Slack and Tassonyi (2012) have argued for uniformity for the sake of clarity- rather than the multiplicity of classes- there is however an argument for commercial/small industrial (sales method) being combined into one property class given the difficulties in making sensible distinctions between a small commercial and a small industrial property and possibly another class of property consisting of properties assessed on the basis of capitalized rental value such as office buildings/shopping centres versus large industrial (costbased) from an assessment perspective.<sup>23</sup> Such measures could be reviewed as part of the broader provincial review of the property tax system.

#### f) Assessment Methodology at Issue

Assessment methodology is reasonably consistent throughout Canada, with some differences as to what constitutes assessable and taxable land and structures. Oil refineries and other large industrial complexes are generally assessed on the basis of the cost approach. (Bird, Slack and Tassonyi 2012 at 110-111) <sup>24</sup> Canadian courts have generally upheld the three most commonly used assessment methods to derive a market value of a property given the existing legislative frameworks. Given the complexity of assessing any particular property, including issues of obsolescence, comparability with best practice in other jurisdictions, etc., this discussion

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Admittedly, Bird, Slack and Tassonyi also raise the point that consideration be given to having a "business value-added tax" replace the local non-residential property tax as a less distortionary tax.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup>The Market Valuation Report for the assessment of oil refineries was developed as part of the Special Purpose Business Property Assessment Review (2013) .This report set out the criteria for the use of the cost approach in the case of large industrial properties. Individual reports were produced for the principal industrial property types. https://www.mpac.ca/sites/default/files/docs/pdf/L2OilRefineries.pdf

necessarily cannot comment on whether the assessments of large industrial properties in Saint John are consistent with best practice.

However, there has been considerable attention paid to the detrimental economic impact of including machinery and equipment in the local tax base. Historically, other Canadian jurisdictions have excluded machinery and equipment used to produce or process materials.

#### g) Economic development—traditional approaches

Municipalities in other jurisdictions have encouraged the growth of their tax base through very specific initiatives. These have included land assembly for industrial parks, the creation of small business incubators and advisory services as well as staff dedicated to assisting potential investors through the municipal approval process. In general, municipalities have also sought to create the conditions to attract industry deemed to be desirable. As noted, this includes a demonstrated ability to provide reliable municipal services at reasonable cost.

An important consideration in the approach to local development efforts is to encourage both the monetization of underutilized municipal assets and one-stop shopping for interested investors.

Both of these issues are recognized in the larger cities in Canada, in the literature and in the EY Report.

Appropriate marketing of unused lands or the development of space for creative occupancy is widespread in other jurisdictions. Furthermore, to facilitate and to aid in the integration of the local economy, it would seem that the proposal of the Economic Development Advisory Council to consolidate itself with Discover Saint John and Develop Saint John could provide an opportunity to coordinate economic development effort on a more regionally focused basis. (EY 2020 45)

#### h) Business Improvement Areas as Local Incubators

Business Improvement Areas have been established in many Canadian and American jurisdictions to co-ordinate the street level improvements, marketing, beautification and special events in primarily non-residential areas of cities. In American cities, these functions have been

extended to include security services as well. There is some evidence that the existence of these organizations has increased property values through the enhancement of local amenities.

In New Brunswick, BIA boundaries usually encompass the area which has traditionally been considered the "downtown" of a community. The BIA concept provides a framework for organized business communities to cooperatively design and manage; promotional campaigns, beautification and upgrading programs and various other revitalization initiatives.

The Business Improvement Areas Act provides a municipal council the authority to establish a BIA, by by-law, when petitioned to do so by the business community. A non-trading corporation is then formed by the business community to represent the interests of the BIA. All businesses and owners of commercial property located within the BIA become members of the new corporation.

Once the BIA Corporation has been established, the Board of Directors can request that council impose a levy on all non-residential property located within the boundaries of the BIA. The funds generated by the levy can be used by the corporation for such things as: establishing and operating an office, implementing promotional campaigns, and undertaking improvement and beautification projects within the BIA. The corporation must submit a budget to the municipal council each year outlining how the funds will be spent before the levy can be imposed.

While some have questioned the accountability and utility of BIA's, <sup>25</sup> these organizations could provide the basis for mobilizing business owners to enhance the amenity values and attractiveness of various areas of the City.

# i) Tax Increment Financing and Tax Increment Equivalent Grants (TIF and TIEG)

By definition, land value capture is a municipal finance mechanism through which local governments generate increases in land values by making regulatory decisions, such as changes in land use or maximum allowable density, as well as infrastructure and transit investments, and then use the incremental land value generated by those actions to finance infrastructure or other public

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> For a summary, see Flynn (2019,9).

benefits. Investments in public transit and transit-oriented development and, by extension, resiliency measures including the expansion of green infrastructure, could be examples of this. Tax increment financing (TIF) is a financial tool which allows local governments to encourage economic development through a public-private partnership mechanism based on property tax. TIF has been widely used in the United States; and some Canadian provinces such as Ontario, Manitoba, and British Colombia have passed TIF legislation.<sup>26</sup>

In general, the American model defines an area, usually in need of 'brownfield' remediation and city center revitalization and infilling. The local tax revenue is divided into two categories, either derived from 1) pre-assessed development or 2) the increased assessed value. The revenues are then typically dedicated to the servicing of debt incurred to upgrade infrastructure.<sup>27</sup>

Under a TIF, property tax revenue from the designated area is divided into two categories for a specific period of time (long enough to recover all costs of public funds used to redevelop the property, usually between 15 and 30 years). Taxes based on pre-developed assessed property values are retained by the municipality for general use. Taxes on increased assessed values arising from redevelopment (the tax increment) are deposited in a special fund to repay bonds that have been issued to finance public improvements in the redeveloped area. In other words, increases in property tax revenue from the redevelopment of an area are dedicated to financing public improvements in that area.

Although TIFs are widely used in the United States, they are not common in Canada. In Manitoba, cities are permitted to use TIFs, but do not currently do so. Legislation in Alberta permits municipalities to use a form of TIF known as the "community revitalization levy." This legislation permits municipalities to impose a property tax on the incremental assessed value of property in a community revitalization area. This revenue is then used to pay for infrastructure and other costs associated with the redevelopment of property in the community revitalization area. Municipalities can issue debentures to cover the costs of redevelopment and use the taxes collected on the increased assessed value to repay the debenture.

<sup>26</sup>. Notably, some municipalities in Alberta, Manitoba, Alberta and British Columbia have used variations of this method. (In Calgary, the East Village Redevelopment uses TIF. In Ontario, municipalities have used community improvement plans to provide tax increment equivalent grants.(TIEG's)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup>. There is always the risk that insufficient development occurs and the municipality is forced to draw on general revenues to meet obligations incurred.

The critique of TIF is centered on US experience. <sup>28</sup> Primarily, the evidence that development would not have taken place but for the assistance provided is weak. The targeting may be at the expense of overall development in the municipality and the revenues can impair the finances of the other taxing bodies that share in the targeted areas' tax base, depending on whether the grantor has an exclusive right to the incremental revenue. (Tassonyi and Conger 2015 and Slack and Tassonyi 2017).

Ontario municipalities may use tax increment equivalent grants (TIEGs) but these are not the same as TIFs because they involve a subsidy component.<sup>29</sup> Under this program, municipalities can designate an area or the entire municipality as a community improvement project area. They can then implement a community improvement plan (CIP) with grants and/or loans which can, if the municipality chooses, be calculated on a tax increment basis. In other words, the municipality can offer developers a grant or loan that is based on the higher property tax that is generated from development.

#### j) Innovative Approaches: Clusters, Civic Capital and Place-Based Initiatives

More recently, municipalities in North America have sought to apply the principles of cluster and agglomeration theory to create initiatives that will create employment opportunities in the STEM sector in order to revitalize inner cities. Using a mix of partnership, land use zoning changes and tax incentives, these initiatives have met with mixed success. Can the positive aspects of these experiences be generalized?

#### k) Civic Capital

A critical component in the development of successful cluster and place-based initiatives is the existence and development of "civic capital". This ingredient is emphasized in a comparative

<sup>28</sup> TIFs in the U.S. have generated a fair amount of criticism. Although originally intended for "blighted" areas in u rban cores where development would not take place "but for" the incentive, the requirement that the area be "blighted" has often been ignored. More recently, TIFs have been used in more affluent neighbourhoods and open spaces (including farmlands) where there is greater potential for property value increases and higher tax revenues (Youngman 2011 and Greenbaum and Landers 2014)). The "but for" test has also been compromised because many developments would have occurred anyway (Youngman 2011). Finally, TIFs target funds to a designated area and this targeting may be at the expense of areas on the periphery of the TIF district or at the expense of overall municipal growth. In American jurisdictions, all of the increment of all of the overlapping taxing jurisdictions including municipalities, school boards and special districts for specific purposes are diverted to the TIF. This has had adverse effects on the

general fiscal health of municipalities where a multiplicity of TIF districts have been established.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> The Province of Ontario passed TIF legislation in 2006 but never enacted regulations.

study by Jen Nelles (2012) which compares the successes and failures in comparative metropolitan policy in Ontario and Germany. In particular, the success of the Kitchener-Waterloo Region is attributed to the strength and density of its local civic capital. Nelles notes that civic capital is created at a regional level by leaders working within networks and across public and private sectors. With collaboration and cooperation, such leadership is instrumental in negotiating regional goals and implementing regional solutions. (Nelles 2012 180)

#### 1) A Local Cluster

Building on the strengths of the local region in energy, a logical cluster approach could bring together community strength in the energy sector. As proposed, SJ Energy could be encouraged to further its efforts in the deployment of smart grid technology and be provided with the appropriate regulatory authority to generate power from sustainable solar and wind installations. Collaboration could set the stage for innovative living lab opportunities for start-ups. Further, legislative authority could be provided to permit the payments of dividends to the municipality to diversify the City's revenue base and to provide the financing for reducing local power costs. (EY,2020, 16)

Conteh (2017 29) in concluding an analysis of the potential for clusters and corridors in northern Ontario notes:

"Communities do not always need lofty blueprints of growth plans. Instead, they need the governance structure designed at the local scale to enable them to mobilize ideas and resources to ensure a sustainable future for themselves, and the partnership of upper levels of government to help them make the necessary investment in realizing those ideas. .. Economic development does not need rigid governance structures, but fluid platforms to think strategically and act regionally along the line of sector-specific supply chains, agglomerations and shared opportunities and needs."

Such a suggestion would seem to be viable if local agencies and knowledge can be brought together in a collaborative way. However, the development of a cluster is not necessarily a panacea. The evidence on cluster impact on productivity is mixed. Principally, the least expensive solution is the "do-no harm approach, by not enacting policies that prevent natural clusters from emerging. (Behrens 2013 23)

#### m) Intergovernmental Urban Development Agreements (UDA's)

Local efforts at place -based economic development may benefit from recent insights into the operation of tri-level urban development agreements, Neil Bradford (2020) makes the case for the key lessons to be drawn from successful experience in Vancouver and Winnipeg. Essential to successful inter-governmental co-operation and responsiveness to local conditions are the following:

"tri-level governance must be embedded in the community and responsive to evolving local priorities; Robust intergovernmental dialogue requires regular meetings among elected officials, senior administrators and especially front -line teams; A nimble policy secretariat must flexibly match governmental resources with neighbourhood priorities; and accountability nust rest on professional evaluations and community feedback in time-limited cycles of renewed mandates."

The lessons to be drawn from the Vancouver and Winnipeg experience include" bottom-up" input from multiple community meetings prior to the signing of the agreements; "integration" including balancing the market with local innovations to address the needs of vulnerable residents and "accountability" in Winnipeg where the UDA's focused on leveraging investment in the community and "Spin-offs" taking the form of infrastructure corporations, neighbourhood centres and community development corporations.

Locally, Downtown New Brunswick has also suggested that a tri-level initiative be considered in partnership with the Province's Regional Development Corporation and the Government of Canada through ACOA. Their suggestion is to utilize the existing network of Business Improvement Areas to encourage:

- a positive investment spirit within the downtown business community and encourage local entrepreneurship.
- Enhance private investment and participation by providing government stimulus assistance in a strategic manner sensitive to the needs of Down-towns in Atlantic Canada which will maximize direct spin-offs locally.
- Revitalize downtowns in a manner consistent with Federal, Provincial and Municipal economic development strategies. It is imperative that downtowns continue to develop critical mass that will provide the base necessary for sustainable economic development.
- Increase the income opportunities and employment benefits through expanded retail and service retail and other businesses within downtowns Increase the income opportunities

and employment benefits through expanded retail and service retail and other businesses within downtowns. ( Downtown New Brunswick 2020)

Such an initiative could provide the basis for intergovernmental co-operation consistent with recent suggestions that governments focus on place-based development initiatives that involve local input across the spectrum of local interest, capacity and need.

#### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings from a Comparison of Saint John to other Cities:

- 1) SJ may be underperforming in terms of growing its potential employment and income and retaining the income that it creates and the population that it attracts
  - iv. Saint John's economic performance does not stand out as weak but is likely not as strong as it could be, given its unique assets and advantages not present in other cities.
  - v. Goods sector employment is flat in Saint John but that is true everywhere in Canada that compares to Saint John.
  - vi. Service sector employment growth in Saint John is weak as with all cities it is comparable to. Big cities have service sector employment growth, smaller cities have not.
  - vii. The number of service sector jobs excluding public sector per goods sector job in Saint John is in line with other cities its size, but lower than Moncton and Halifax, and London. Moncton is much higher because of warehousing and transportation.
  - viii. Saint John's service employment is relatively high compared to other cities for professional services, business and support services. Saint John is weaker on retail and wholesale
- c. SJ's competition is from other cities in the region, and with the communities surrounding it. Population growth driven by the regional economy stimulate residential construction and tax base increases outside of the City in places like Quispamsis
  - i. The City of Saint John is not competitive for attracting residents to the CMA to locate in the City over Quispamsis and Rothesay.
  - ii. Residential construction and population growth are occurring more outside of the City than in it.
- d. The City of Saint John has high revenue per capita which is offset by a disproportionately high per capita spending on police and fire protection services. It appears that those high expenditures have crowded out spending on recreation and culture and general government.

In our view, based on these comparisons, the City of Saint John challenges for improving its tax base are to:

- 1) Creating business conditions that allow its anchor industries, including the Port, to expand and to retain more of the business services, and supply chain businesses, around those industries
- 2) Create the conditions that compete for service businesses as a way to diversity the local economy, create new export opportunities and provide the ancillary support needed to attract, retain and support the development of head offices.
- 3) Create the conditions, and develop the communities and neighbourhoods, that attract population to reside in the City of Saint John over outlying communities.

## WHAT CAN THE CITY OF SJ DO WITH ITS REVENUE, SPENDING, INVESTMENT AND OTHER STRATEGIES TO GROW ITS TAX BASE?

- 1) Create a more positive reputation for the City do things the right way, avoid negativity
- 2) Create the budget capacity and flexibility to make positive investments
  - a. Look for a tax increment from the communities benefiting from the regional economy driven by the City to relieve the City's fiscal pressures
  - b. Address the debt burden
- 3) Other strategies for creating advantages for business investment
  - a. Facilitate local initiative from the bottom-up
  - b. Initiate discussion with other orders of government to begin the process of place-based development agreements

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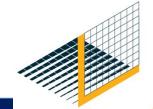
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## **DRAFT REPORT**

## City of Saint John Budgeting for Growth

#### Submitted to:

Ian Fogan Ian.Fogan@saintjohn.ca City of Saint John

### Submitted by:

Gregor MacAskill gregmacaskill@gardnerpinfold.ca Gardner Pinfold Consultants Inc.

Gardner Pinfold www.gardnerpinfold.ca Nova Scotia 2102 Oxford Street Halifax NS 272 Halifax B31 272 Canada B31 4 700 ph: 902-421-1720 rux: yuz-4/2-3343 mgardner@gardnerpinfold.ca New Brunswick 46 Weldon Street rn/rax: 300-939-2261 gregmacaskill@gardnerpinfold.ca British Columbia 6150 Baillie Rd. Sechelt, BC Orthorn DV 3A7
Canada. 740-2703
Ph. 604-740-2703 tpinfold@gardnerpinfold.ca

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# **Executive Summary**

### Background

The City of Saint John is undertaking a 10-year strategic planning process. There is a need to review how cities in North America that were facing challenges managed to grow their tax base, population, and employment by making strategic investments and aligning their budgets with growth objectives.

#### Success cases

This report highlights four (4) cases in North America of cities that have been in a similar situation to Saint John and successfully grew their population and local economy. Some of the ways they improved their circumstances are very much like the opportunities before Saint John including: waterfront developments, downtown redevelopments, reinventing former industrial lands, presenting the City in a new way to residents and visitors, community engagement, and capitalizing on local natural assets.

### **Interpreting cases**

Although there are many similarities with Saint John, the decisions made by the case cities are not meant to be prescriptions for Saint John. The key in each case is that the successful city identified the prime barriers/opportunities for growth and took decisive actions to address those using the best approaches in their particular circumstances.

### **Budgeting and financial insights**

The financial decisions and patterns for each successful city are highlighted from the revenue, expenditure, and fund balances found in the 60 consolidated annual financial reports (CAFR) reviewed from the four communities over the past fifteen years.

#### Top ten success factors

Based on observed patterns from the four cases and other recommendations from literature review, the following highlights ten factors in successful city turnaround and growth experiences:

- **Budgets align with strategic decisions** once cities identify their priority, budgets for the next ten to fifteen years shift resources accordingly.
- **Moderate and persistent shifts** Across the four cases, the largest average annual percentage changes in department budgets were in the 3.2%-6.9% range. The persistence over fifteen years is what produced the impressive cumulative investments ranging from \$110M to \$199M.
- □ Success breeds success − City representatives often pointed to small early successes as instrumental for getting momentum started, convincing partners to come on board, and engaging the community in longer-term projects.

- □ **Flexibility and finding the right path to success** each successful case is very different and there are no "silver bullets" for overcoming economic challenges.
- □ **Public spaces** All of the developments involved substantial improvements for public access and enjoyment. Waterfront trails, parks, civic squares, and attractive shopping streets became prime public spaces for both residents and tourists.
- **Economic development and liveability** None of the cases focused solely on economic development (e.g. attracting/expanding businesses), and all recognized that improving the lifestyle and livability of the community worked hand-in-hand with economic development.
- □ **Intentionality and commitment to change** For all cases there was a pivot point at which the community decided to become something other than what it had been traditionally.
- □ **Turning water into wine** In many cases drawbacks such as brownfields, abandoned buildings, and vacant lots were turned into assets and focal points for the community.
- **Economic diversification and entrepreneurial development** are considered more valuable for growth than attracting large employers. Large employers may follow, but it is not usually the first goal.
- □ **Public-private finance tools** communities have become increasingly sophisticated in creating a menu of financing tools and layering them to move developments forward.

Case study findings are valuable and, as always, must be applied carefully to another location such as Saint John. The best ideas are to be adapted in the context of Saint John assets and opportunities, strategic planning, and on-going community development initiatives. To the extent possible, foreseeing the trajectory of current trends and major economic developments such as the Amazon effect, increasing mobility of workers, de-carbonizing the economy, is also critical to consider in making commitments for the next decade or more.

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background

The City of Saint John is undertaking a 10-year strategic planning process. There is a need to review how cities in North America that were facing challenges managed to grow their tax base, population, and employment by making strategic investments and aligning their budgets with growth objectives.

### 1.2 Goal and objectives

Saint John is underway with numerous initiatives toward economic growth involving strategic budgeting and investment, and the following builds on this by specifically examining:

- □ **Success cases** focused on similar municipalities in North America that faced significant challenges then strategically grew their tax base and local economy;
- □ **Success factors** highlighted from the cases, along with reviews of other successful turnaround and growth examples that provide insights for Saint John; and
- □ Saint John context linking successful strategies with Saint John's direction according to key documents and plans.

# 2. Approach

The selected cases are based on a literature review to **identify cities in similar situations to Saint John**, that managed to dramatically improve their circumstances. Ideally, these would include examples in Canada, however documented cases are scarce (globally), as the literature is more focused on other municipal issues or "the fastest growing" municipalities, which tend to inherit their success from local developments rather than catalyze it themselves. Many "turnarounds" have also been accomplished by larger or smaller communities than Saint John, or happened in the more distant past.

All four cases have aspects that are very familiar to Saint John such as: waterfront developments, downtown redevelopments, reinventing former industrial lands, presenting the City in a new way to residents and visitors, community engagement, and capitalizing on local natural assets. The four cases selected are from the U.S. and they represent communities of a similar size that made strategic decisions in the last ten to fifteen years, and they are still employing their strategies today so these remain highly relevant.

The financial decisions and patterns for each community are highlighted from the revenue, expenditure, and fund balances found in the **60 consolidated annual financial reports** (CAFR) of the four communities over the past fifteen years.

# 3. Roanoke, Virginia

www.roanokeva.gov

### 3.1 Background

With a population of 99,000 (2019), Roanoke is the largest city in the western part of the state and is located 160 kms north of Greensboro, North Carolina. Norfolk & Western Railway had their headquarters in Roanoke for nearly 100 years, then moved to Norfolk in 1982. Several banks consolidated into North Carolina taking more jobs away.



1 Roanoke, Virginia – "Mountain City and Hub for Innovation."

### 3.2 Turnaround focus

In 2000, the City launched an extensive public participation process *Vision 2001-2020*. A comprehensive plan was passed the following year with guiding principles including: "quality of life and economic development are integrally related", "quality design principles enhance the city", "Roanoke should be a sustainable community", and "Roanoke needs both public and private investment ...to ensure continued vitality and growth". The City then focused on two priorities: downtown re-development, and making outdoor recreation an economic driver.

## 3.3 What did they do?

Downtown re-development was stimulated by: façade grants, park beautification projects, job training grants, property tax exemptions, and rebates for municipal water, fire and sewer hookup fees. The focus on outdoor recreation as an economic driver capitalized on nearby state parks, the Appalachian Trail, Blue Ridge Parkway, and other environmental assets. Over 40 kms of greenways were constructed, biking trails with amenities were improved to earn the designation of Bicycle Friendly Community, 12,000 acres were placed under conservation easements to safeguard key assets, and the city tree canopy was increased to 40% coverage over a ten year period.

- (www.allentownpa.gov/Neighborhood-Improvement-Zone)



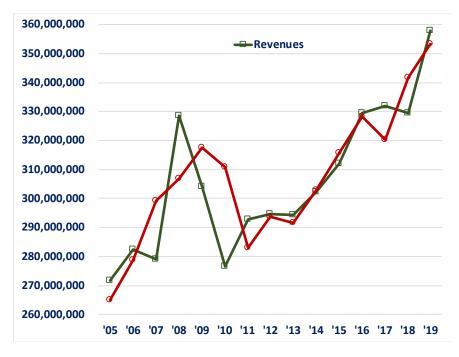


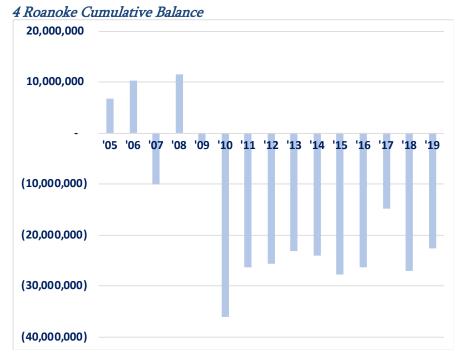
2 Combining City Life with Outdoor Adventure.

### 3.4 Finances

Over fifteen years, revenues grew by \$101M (42%). The City took on debt in 2008 and 2009 (revenue spike in graph), followed by very little borrowing until 2015 and 2016.

### 3 Roanoke Revenues and Expenditures



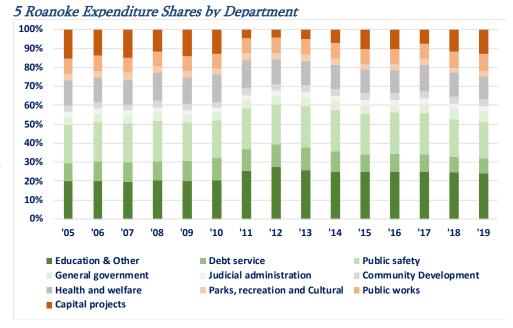


The debt acquisition in 2008 and 2009 marks the beginning of a period negative balances. This marks a contrast with the other three case studies.

## 3.5 How Was Spending Allocated?

**Increases:** Education and "Other" spending increased by an annual average of \$14.2M or 3.4% (2019 values) and this remained fairly steady across the period. Debt servicing increased in this case due to rising payments rather than principal repayment, and on an annual average basis was up \$3.2M or 0.8% (2019 values). Public Safety and General Government departments also gained over the period.

Decreases: Annual allotments declined for capital projects and public works. On average \$22.9M was diverted from these two departments to other priorities, for a total of \$321M redirected over the fifteen years.



# 4. Deluth, Minnesota

www.duluthmn.gov

## 4.1 Background

With a population of 86,000 (2019) situated 250 kms north of Minneapolis, Deluth offers a major seaport on the western shores of Lake Superior. In 1979, a steel facility fed by nearby mines closed and put 5,000 out of work while leaving a 640 acre contaminated site. Unemployment soared to over 20% in the 1980s and the population dropped 20% over the next 30 years. By 2008 there was a structural deficit of over \$4M and revenues were flat or declining.



1 "Our Northern Minnesota grit and Midwest work ethic has Duluth's economy humming".

### 4.2 Turnaround focus

Deluth focused on growing their younger demographic population (age 20-34), tourism, and diversifying their economy. From 2005 to 2019, the overall population grew by almost 1,000 (1.1%) and the younger demographic group grew by 15%. The City's revenue from tourism taxes grew by \$4.6M (59%) from 2010 to 2019. Key growth sectors include aerospace, engineering, education, and health care.

## 4.3 What did they do?

The City created an authentic image by embracing its industrial past as a "battle-tested community" while taking a new approach to future development. Strong promotion of



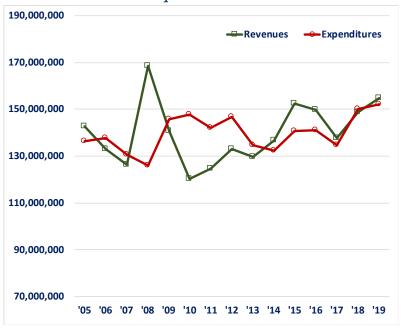
2 Outside Magazine named Deluth the "Best Town Ever" in 2014.

music and the arts, and expanding local parks and trails for hiking and outdoor activity was instrumental in attracting and retaining younger families. New craft breweries and restaurants created a vibrant scene that helped companies attract young talent. Business opportunities as well as a desirable lifestyle combined the amenities of a larger city with the charm of a smaller town. Maurices Clothing with 900 stores across the U.S. and Canada built a new 11-storey headquarters in Deluth. Loll Designs and Epicurean manufacturing outdoor furniture from recycled plastics, grew their shipments by 30% and 15% respectively in recent years, with national and international shipments from Deluth.

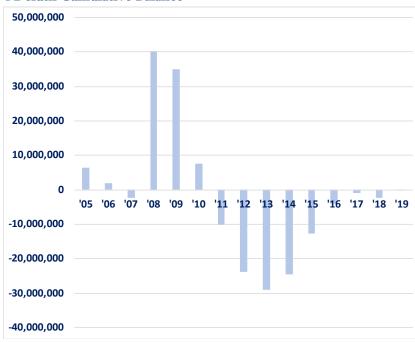
### 4.4 Finances

Over fifteen years, revenues grew by \$34M (30%). Although not pronounced growth, this represented welcome stability after a long period of decline.

3 Deluth Revenues and Expenditures



#### 4 Deluth Cumulative Balance

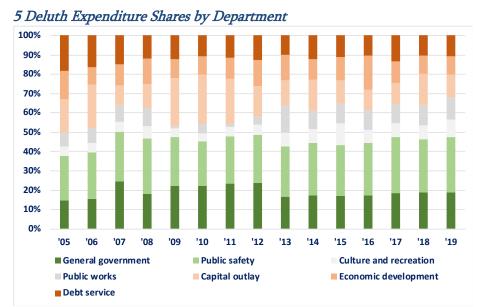


The first three years of this period were stable followed by two years of growth (2008 and 2009). The City's balance slipped negative after the 2008 financial crisis, then moved in the right direction starting in 2014 and returned to balance by 2017.

## 4.5 How Was Spending Allocated?

**Increases:** General government spending increased by an annual average of \$7.9M or 5.0% (2019 values), with the highest investments during the six (6) year period from 2007 to 2012. Public safety increased by an annual average of \$4.9M or 3.1% (2019 values).

**Decreases:** Annual allotments declined for debt servicing, economic development, and capital outlay. The substantial decline for debt servicing is really just the result of the improved financial position for the City, whereas reduced spending on economic development and capital projects were real choices in the budgeting process.



## 5. Debuque, Iowa

www.cityofdubuque.org



6 Port of Dubuque

## 5.1 Background

With a population of 58,000 (2019), Debuque is 280 kms northwest of Chicago and was one of the first settlements west of the Mississippi River. In the early 1980s large employers like John Deere and Dubuque Packing Co. closed their operations in town. Unemployment climbed to 23%, the downtown vacancy rate reached 55%, and the population declined 7.8% from 1980 to 1990.

### 5.2 Turnaround focus

Community-driven planning strategies were the foundation for Dubuque's economic rebound. This was the basis for 23 implementation plans with the central one focused on their riverfront redevelopment. There were many brownfields initially, so both tourists and residents had limited access to the riverfront. This was transformed into a 90-acre walkable,

mixed-use development. A nearby industrial center now has 24 firms, of which three are new to the area and 21 are local companies that expanded. By 2013, the unemployment rate was just 3.5 percent and GDP growth was 5.1%.

## 5.3 What did they do?

City, state, federal, private, and Historical Society investments were combined to launch the development project. The first phase featured the Mississippi Riverwalk, a museum and aquarium,



7 Imagine Dubuque 2037 – "A Call to Action" (photo: Grand River Centre)

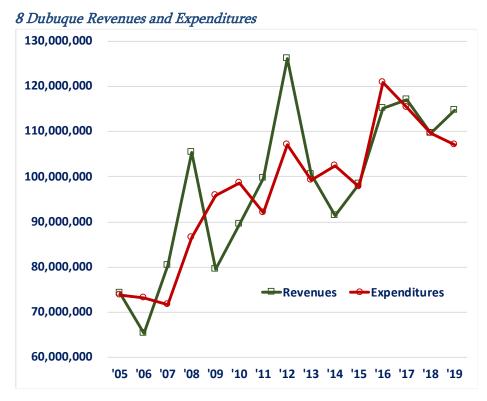
entertainment centre, resort accommodations, and a restored historic brewery complex. A second phase added a casino, movie theatre, improved gateway to the City, and park space.

Community consultation was considered instrumental, with about 15,000 people contributing more than 3,000 ideas that were narrowed to 100 before selecting the 30 finalists. The City's view is that, in addition to generating a lot of great ideas, the process gave credibility to the plan and this helped to attract private investment and donations. Community engagement still continues with annual visioning and planning processes.

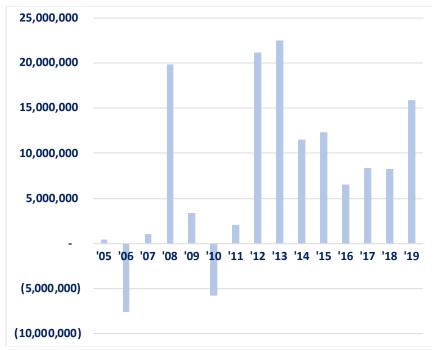
- (www.cityofdubuque.org/2432/Imagine-Dubuque)

### 5.4 Finances

Over fifteen years, revenues grew by \$43M (62%). In 2008 and 2012 the City took on debt for capital projects. The growth in revenue has allowed expenditures to increase gradually over the period.



### 9 Dubuque Cumulative Balance



The first three years reflect the end of the financial struggles, with the exception of fluctuations after the 2008 financial crisis. Since then the City's balance has remained in a strong positive position.

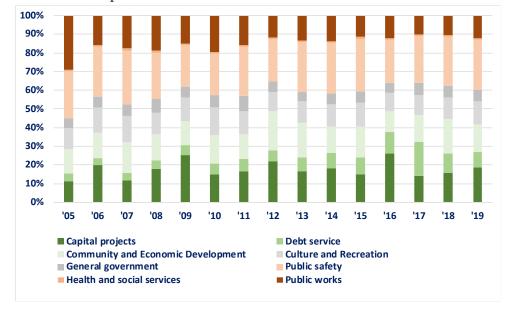
## 5.5 How Was Spending Allocated?

**Increases:** Capital project spending increased by an annual average of \$10.1M or 6.9% (2019 values), with major investments in 2009, 2012, and 2016. Debt repayment increased by an annual average of \$5.9M or 3.7% (2019 values), owing mainly to major payments in 2016 and 2017 when the City was in a good position to do this. Community and Economic Development also gained \$2.8M per year (2019 values) or 2.0% annually.

10 Dubuque Expenditure Shares by Department

Decreases: Annual allotments declined for public works and health and social services. Public

works spending was unusually high in the base year (2005), but there was over \$10M diverted annually from public works to other priorities. Totaling this over the fifteen year period amounts to a \$150M or more redirected to other departments.



# 6. Allentown, Pennsylvania

www.allentownpa.gov

### 6.1 Background

With a population of 121,000 (2019), Allentown is one of the oldest towns in the United States (Est. 1762). It is located 144 kms west of New York and 96 kms north of Philadelphia. When large companies like Bethlehem Steel and Mack Trucks closed or moved their operations, the downtown was deserted and became unsafe with abandoned buildings and increasing crime activity.



116 Old Allentown – "Preserving the Past, Brightening the Future".

### 6.2 Turnaround focus

Allentown combined downtown revitalization with increased public safety to start reducing crime in 2007 and bring 4,000 jobs back to the downtown area. Over \$1 billion in downtown development included a Marriott hotel with retail outlets, a local Health Network centre, CrossAmerica Partners, and BB&T Corporation building. From 2005 to 2019, the overall population grew by almost 15,000 (14%).

## 6.3 What did they do?

Allentown worked with the State of Pennsylvania to designate a Neighbourhood Improvement Zone (NIZ) in 2009 to establish a special taxing program. All taxes generated within the NIZ (e.g. state income tax, corporate tax, sales tax, but not property taxes) could be used to service debt on any improvements within the zone. When a building is built in that zone the developer can get back the sales tax on any purchase made in the building for up to 30 years. This drives developers to



17 Hamilton Commercial District – "Work Places and Faces".

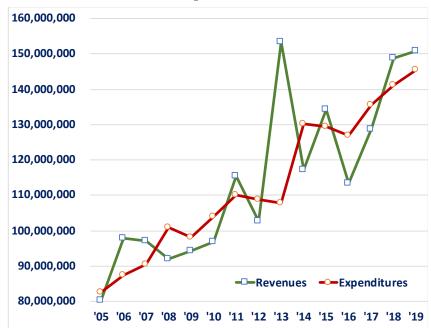
establish businesses that can generate taxes inside the zone, and if so they can offer up to 20-30% discounts because of the tax advantages. The tax benefits are capped since they cannot exceed the initial debt, and the State is now collecting the excess tax revenues while the

Town has gained property tax revenue since the start. The program is not just for developers since other entrepreneurs can access the tax advantage through rent credits as well.

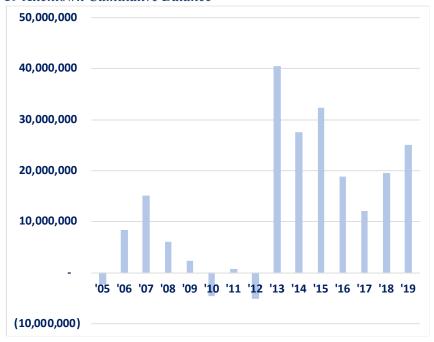
### 6.4 Finances

Over fifteen years, revenues grew by \$61M (81%). In 2013, the Town sold the water and sewer utility to the Lehigh County Authority for \$211 million plus a \$500,000 annual payment starting in 2016. The Town used \$170 million for a pension plan settlement and the remaining \$41M contributed to the 2013 spike in revenues (Figure right).





### 19 Allentown Cumulative Balance



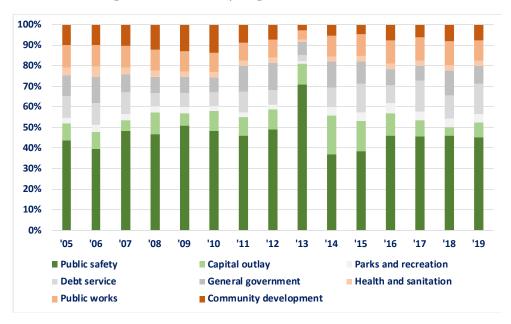
The year 2005 marked the end of a long period of deficits. The City's balance improved until the 2008 financial crisis, and resumed a positive trajectory in 2013.

## 6.5 How Was Spending Allocated?

**Increases:** Public safety spending increased by an annual average of \$11.7M or 3.2% (2019 values) although there was a major investment in 2013 in the year of the utility sale. Capital outlays increased by an annual average of \$3.2M or 1.3% (2019 values).

**Decreases:** Annual allotments declined for community development, public works, and health and sanitation. The decline for community development may not seem intuitive, but this represented a shift in the nature of community development toward the downtown capital investment.

### 20 Allentown Expenditure Shares by Department



# 7. Top Ten Success Factors

The following observations and highlights are drawn from the review of successful cases and related literature.

- Budgets align with strategic decisions Debuque's focus on riverfront development led to consistent budgets favouring capital projects, community economic development, and culture and recreation. Likewise, Allentown identified crime and public safety as a priority along with downtown redevelopment, and budgets for the next fifteen years shifted resources to these departments.
- Moderate and persistent shifts Across the four cases, the largest average annual percentage changes in department budgets were 6.9%, 5.0%, 3.4% and 3.2%. In 2019 dollar values these represented average annual increases of \$10.1M (Debuque), \$7.9M (Deluth), \$14.2M (Roanoke), and \$11.7 (Allentown). These are moderately sized investment increases, but the persistence over fifteen years is what produces the impressive cumulative totals ranging from \$110M (Deluth) to \$199M (Roanoke).
- □ Success breeds success − City representatives often pointed to small early successes as instrumental for getting momentum started, convincing partners to come on board, and engaging the community in longer-term projects. A sense of accomplishment was said to build confidence for tackling larger initiatives.
- □ Flexibility and finding the right path to success each successful case is very different and there are no "silver bullets" for overcoming economic challenges. Each city identified a clear objective and set out to accomplish that in the way that worked best in their circumstances. A clear sense of local advantages often played a role in what became the development focus or the way it was tackled.
- □ **Public spaces** One mayor asserted that "The best property in a community ought to be in the public realm". All of the developments involved substantial improvements for public access and enjoyment. Waterfront trails, parks, civic squares, and attractive shopping streets became prime public spaces for both residents and tourists.
- Economic development and liveability None of the cases focused solely on economic development (e.g. attracting/expanding businesses), and all recognized that improving the lifestyle and livability of the community worked hand-in-hand with economic development.
- □ Intentionality and commitment to change For all cases there was a pivot point at which the community decided to become something other than what it had been traditionally. The community formed a new identity with a compelling story for residents and visitors. This did not necessarily mean abandoning it's history, on the contrary an industrial past and manufacturing heritage became strengths behind their

new economy. Allentown and Deluth are examples of pitching their "battle-tested" workforce and strong work ethic for prospective employers, but also the sense of a rugged place for adventure.

- □ **Turning water into wine** In many cases drawbacks such as brownfields, abandoned buildings, and vacant lots were turned into assets and focal points for the community. High crime neighbourhoods were turned into nationally recognized community development projects, and empty mall spaces were turned into top tourist attractions featuring arts and culture (Newcastle, NSW).
- Economic diversification and entrepreneurial development are considered more valuable for growth than attracting large employers. Large employers may follow, but it is not usually the first goal. Diversification is important for resilience as economic cycles and trends shape fortunes from year to year. This has garnered more attention in the pandemic since it could not have been known beforehand that certain businesses would be unexpectedly closed or curtailed. Areas that are highly dependent on one or two sectors are more vulnerable. Entrepreneurial spirit is commonly associated with the private sector, but it is equally important in the public sector when it comes to problem-solving, work arounds, and pursuit of joint opportunities with partners.
- □ **Public-private finance tools** communities have become increasingly sophisticated in creating a menu of financing tools and layering them to move developments forward. Creative solutions require working with other levels of government, private sector, non-profits, universities, donors, and others. A recent World Towns Agreement principle is "Great relationships with blurred boundaries".

Before closing, it is important to acknowledge the challenges municipalities have when trying to grow their revenues. Limited revenue options leave municipalities focusing primarily on growing their property assessment base. Continued efforts to develop alternative revenue sources will be needed in the coming decades. Some examples include: progressive tax rates or new tax rate classes, municipal sales taxes (used in 25 U.S. states), Air BnB taxes (e.g. Ottawa), digital sales taxes implemented in Quebec with a potential funding formula for municipalities.

It is also important to exercise caution with common historical strategies in a rapidly evolving economy where, for example:

- □ **The Amazon effect** is shifting from retail stores to retail distribution networks, leading to erosion of the commercial tax base and local retail jobs.
- Increasing mobility of workers and trends toward flexible work arrangements that are being accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic. Workers may increasingly locate in neighbouring communities or in even more remote locations outside the province or country.

□ **Low carbon economy** - developing in Canada will offer opportunities for electrification, efficiency, and new products and services, while continued reliance on carbon-intensity will be deterred (i.e. carbon taxes). Risk assessments including carbon dependence are becoming more important to public and private sector decision-makers.

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# A Few Economic Growth Ideas: Plan the Work, Work the Plan

# **Final Report**



Prepared for the City of Saint John
Prepared by Don Mills
March 1, 2021

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### Introduction

It is understood that the City of Saint John is undertaking a ten-year strategic planning process and has issued a call for proposals for an independent assessment and recommendations concerning the City's priorities going forward to grow the municipality, as an input to that planning process. To that end, I am pleased to submit this report which uses the examples of three successful communities in Atlantic Canada as models for the types of best practices that the City of Saint John should take into consideration to grow the city.

As part of this project, I did a comprehensive review of a variety of plans and reports from comparator cities and the City of Saint John, as well as conducted a number of conversations with key individuals involved in economic development across the region (refer to Appendix for list of both).

### **Background**

The City of Saint John lost 25 percent of its population between 1971 and 2016. Saint John was the only city in Canada to lose population in the last census. The loss of population had an immediate and direct negative impact on the City's finances, resulting in a \$3 million reduction in the unconditional grant from the Province.

Indeed, a significant portion of higher income households left the city for nearby communities in the Kennebecascis Valley over the last thirty years, disproportionately hurting the City's tax base. Rising cost of municipal services and a stagnant population base has led to Saint John having among the highest property tax rates in the country among the top 25 cities. The struggle to have nearby communities share in the costs of services is continuing and unresolved. The pandemic has further challenged the City. The Uptown has become largely deserted as people work from home. Local businesses are closing or just hanging on without those normally working in the core. Brunswick Square is in trouble and is in need of considerable re-investment.

Prior to the pandemic, there were encouraging signs that the City's population had begun to grow again, mostly through immigration. Although the pandemic has slowed this growth, it is clear that without population growth, there can be no economic prosperity for the city. This is especially true given the aging demographics of the city and the increasing departure from the workforce of the baby boom generation. Without population growth, there will be an insufficient labour force to drive the City's economy going forward. To its credit, the City developed a formal population growth strategy with a modest budget (\$250,000) for that purpose which has demonstrated some early success.

As someone who has worked in Saint John over a long period of time, I was always struck by the unrealized potential of the City, especially in the Uptown area where I had an office for nearly twenty years. During the daytime, the Uptown was a beehive (pre-Covid) of activity. During the evenings, it was a virtual ghost town. The underutilization of the waterfront was another clear opportunity for the City. The recent progress associated with the potential redevelopment of Fundy Quay will be a game changer for both the Uptown and the City's waterfront.

Almost every city that has undertaken an economic revival process has had the revitalization of its urban core as a key driver. Furthermore, cities with waterfronts have incorporated a mix-used, pedestrian

friendly redevelopment of its waterfront assets as part of their economic development. Saint John must do the same, beginning with a master plan for the Uptown and waterfront that is driven by a goal to significantly increase the number of people living in the Uptown area. This strategy is already working for Moncton, Charlottetown and Halifax, the three fastest growing urban communities in Atlantic Canada. The densification of the urban core leads to more economic activity, the creation of more businesses to support an increasing population, the attraction of younger residents, the creation of a walkable community and a more attractive visitor destination with increased public safety. Every city needs a strong and healthy urban core that generates a pride of place and contributes to better place making in general.

The creation of the Greater Saint John Economic Development Agency is a key step in realizing and taking advantage of the City of Saint John as an economic hub for southwestern New Brunswick. Indeed, there is a population of more than 165,000 people living within 65 kilometers of Saint John. Any economic strategy should include recognizing and promoting Saint John as a destination for employment opportunities, shopping, entertainment, arts and culture.

### **Guiding Principles for Successful Economic Development**

In reviewing the components most associated with successful economic development strategies, the following guidelines appear to be common.

- 1. A recognition that quality of life and economic development are integrally linked.
- 2. A commitment to the revitalization of the urban core and/or waterfront is essential.
- 3. Strong community leadership and engagement is a must.
- 4. Building a community that is sustainable is key.
- 5. Developing a comprehensive, metric driven economic development strategy is critical.

According to the US's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the following smart growth principles are key to successful community development.

- Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.
- Create walkable communities with active transportation.
- Increase the quality and quantity of open spaces.
- Make development decisions timely, predictable, fair and cost effective.
- Encourage community engagement in development decisions.
- Focus on mixed-use strategies.

Further, Boston based ICIC (<u>www.icic.org</u>) identifies five factors driving economic growth in small cities like Saint John.

- 1. Development of entrepreneurial ecosystems
- 2. Human investments driving new economy growth
- 3. Strong social capital
- 4. Strong quality of place, vibrant downtown environments
- 5. Dedication to progress through community leadership.

ICIC is an organization dedicated to urban development initiatives and has developed a useful **Cluster Growth Toolkit for Cities** that the new regional economic development agency may find to be of some value.

### **Building Blocks for Economic Development**

It is apparent that many of the key building blocks for economic development for the City of Saint John are already in place. Indeed, there has been significant progress on a number of fronts evident in the past several years including population growth, tax reform efforts and consolidation of economic development agencies.

#### • Urban Core Master Plan

The Central Peninsula Secondary Plan is a comprehensive master plan completed in 2019. It recognizes the Central Peninsula as "the home to the highest intensity of land use and residential density, the historic heart of the City and an urban hub for employment, arts and culture, entertainment and tourism". It envisions under-utilized and vacant lands being repurposed for residential and commercial space, including more affordable housing. Together with the work completed by Move SJ which outlines the opportunities for improved transit and active transportation strategies, the City has a clear blue print for the future development of its urban core. It follows the equally impressive Plan SJ that was completed in 2009. What is less clear is what progress has been achieved between these two urban core master plans?

The Secondary Plan is a comprehensive and ambitious plan. This is a road map for the future of the Uptown, Southend and Waterloo Village. It clearly identifies the need and the specific opportunities to develop the city's waterfront as a high priority. The detail in the plan is impressive. The recognition of the important opportunity associated with the under-utilized and vacant land assets (300 undeveloped land lots in the Central Peninsula) serves to quantify this opportunity. Further the plan outlines the historic architectural assets particularly in the "Trinity Royal" heritage conservation area of the Uptown. It is noteworthy that the Uptown had the greatest population growth (+15%) in the last census that indicated an overall decline in the City's population (-2.2%).

The plan quantifies the housing and population growth opportunity for the peninsular (1,200 residential units over the next ten years, with an additional 2,400 new residents). This goal may not be ambitious enough if the population of the City grows at a more desirable rate of 1% percent per year. As recommended, an increase in population of 1% per year over the next ten years will require accommodation for nearly 7,000 residents or about 3,500 housing units. The plan also identifies the opportunity to create 350 new businesses with 4,000 additional jobs on the peninsula. Since the release of the plan a little over a year ago, about three hundred housing units have been or are being developed in the Uptown with more on the drawing board.

The plan correctly identifies regulatory reforms necessary to implement the plan and the need for clarity and predictability of the development process for the city. I would add the need for timeliness as well. The Community Action Framework provides the appropriate context and guidelines for the implementation of the plan.

I would add that while it is appropriate to identify priority actions for all regions within the Central Peninsula, the focus, in my opinion, needs to be squarely on the Uptown and Waterfront, which will drive development throughout the peninsula and indeed the City as a whole.

This urban core master plan is a key building block for the future economic growth of the City. While the plan itself has reasonably clear aspirations of what the future city could be, it lacks the inspirational

element that is best exhibited in Moncton's Downtown Development Improvement Plan which provides a more visual conceptual representation of the future of that city. Indeed, the use of visual modelling would greatly improve the value of Saint John's urban core plan, especially with regard to the development of the Uptown and waterfront components. The recasting of the urban core plan into more of an inspirational/marketing document would provide both residents and investors with a greater appreciation of the potential future of the City.

#### Waterfront Master Plan

Without question, the re-development of Saint John's waterfront is key to the future growth of the City. What is lacking is a mutually agreed master plan between the City and Port regarding future uses of the waterfront. The 2003 Inner Harbour Land Use and Implementation Strategy provides the basis for such an agreement. According to Neil Jacobsen, the first General Manager of the Saint John Waterfront Development Partnership, the guiding principles of that plan are still relevant, as are the plan's four imperatives.

- o Articulate a compelling vision
- o Lead a regional renaissance
- o Pursue and capitalize on unique opportunities
- Define priority projects

The plan's implementation strategy envisioned much of the redevelopment of the waterfront to be completed by 2025. Although some modest progress has been made against that early plan, including the early development of Harbour Passage, much more needs to be done.

Regardless, this 2003 master plan for the waterfront remains both relevant and a key building block for the City's economic growth. The development of Fundy Quay is an important game changer for the waterfront. The \$200 million West Side Port modernization project now underway presents a potential "win-win" opportunity for the City and the Port to reach agreement on the future development of the waterfront. There remains road blocks, however, that need to be overcome, including the possible relocation of the controversial AIM industrial crusher operations, as well as the future use of Long Wharf, Long Wharf Slip, Lower Cove and Partridge Island.

#### Population Growth Strategy

The City recognized early the need for a population growth strategy after the 2016 census which revealed that Saint John was the only city in Canada to lose population during the previous five years. The City funded this effort and the early results indicate that the City's population is now growing again. The movement of residents from the City to nearby bedroom communities over the previous several decades has been extremely harmful to the City's financial situation. Saint John currently has the highest property taxes in New Brunswick and the highest among the top 25 cities in Canada as a consequence. Without attracting more people to the City, the fiscal challenges faced by the municipality are largely unmanageable. In Halifax, there was a similar out-migration from the peninsula of the City over a long period of time. That pattern has now been reversed as more and more residents and newcomers, especially young people, seek an urban lifestyle.

Immigration is the key to population growth. More than 80% of Canada's population growth can be attributed directly to immigration. In New Brunswick, only 5% of residents were born in another country as of the last censes. Compare this to more than 20% born in another country for Canada as a whole. Atlantic Canada has not had its share of immigrants for decades, leaving our economy in worse condition and growing more slowly than elsewhere in Canada. It is expected that virtually all population growth in Canada will be fully dependent on immigration in the near future. It is the reason the federal government announced last year that the number of immigrants allowed into the country would be increased to 400,000 over the next three years. While the pandemic has derailed the numbers of immigrants entering the country in the last year, it is anticipated that the numbers entering the country will be rapidly increased as the restrictions on travel ease from Covid. This presents an opportunity for Atlantic Canada to increase the number of immigrants coming to the region. Indeed, it could be argued that provinces like New Brunswick must insist on having access to its fair share of new immigrants to Canada or risk falling farther behind the rest of the country.

The focus of the Saint John Population Strategy on immigrants is appropriate, as it the recognition that retention is key and requires special efforts of the community not just to be passively friendly, but actively welcoming. Recent population estimates from StatsCan indicate that the Saint John CMA has grown 2.2 percent in the last four years. For comparative purposes, the Charlottetown CA grew 12.3 percent, the Moncton CMA grew 6.9 percent and the Halifax CMA grew 8.3 percent over the same time frame. It is clear that the City needs to have more aggressive population growth targets going forward.

The Province's immigration strategy calls for 7,500 new immigrants per year by 2024 (1 percent of the population) with the four key objectives which also are appropriate for Saint John's strategy.

- Attract skilled workforce aligned with labour market needs
- Recruit entrepreneurs that encourage sustainable economic development
- Create a welcoming environment
- Engage communities to foster a more diverse and welcoming province.

The Saint John CMA (17.5 percent of the provincial population) needs a population strategy to ensure it attracts its proportional share of the province's immigration target. Thus the immigrant target for the new regional economic development agency should be 1,320 new immigrants to the community by 2024.

### • Regional Economic Development Agency

The amalgamation of various economic development agencies (including Enterprise Saint John, Develop SJ and Discover SJ) into a single agency for Greater Saint John's is another important economic development building block. The City of Saint John is the economic hub for a region that has a population of more than 165,000 living within 65 kilometres of the City. It is clear that Saint John is already a regional hub for employment, shopping and entertainment. More than 18,000 commuters travel to the City for work each day. This 65 kilometre radius is important because market research has confirmed that this is the distance the majority of New Brunswickers would be prepared to travel for work and for major services such as healthcare. This represents significant economic opportunity for the City as a destination.

The new agency will have its new CEO in place in February with the first priority of developing a collaborative economic strategy for the region. According to Paulette Hicks, the new CEO, the identification of economic cluster with the greatest potential for growth will be key that strategy, as will seeking partnership with the private sector in the development and implementation of the final strategic plan. One of early tasks of the new agency is to establish its own brand identity which was imminent at the time of writing. It is understood that the new agency, like the Halifax Partnership, is hoping to evolve into a public-private model, with funding from both sectors.

#### Port of Saint John

The Port of Saint John is a key economic driver for the City and an important strategic partner in the development of the both the economic strategy for Greater Saint John and the waterfront. In reviewing the Land Use Plan completed in 2011 for the Saint John Port Authority, there was clear recognition by the Port at that time of its role in the development of the waterfront. It was recognized that Long Wharf was an underutilized asset and the plan envisioned a number of revenue generating opportunities for the Port including not just as a site for cruise ship use and for marine transportation, but for tourism infrastructure, retail and restaurants and commercial and office space. Indeed, Irving Oil had identified this site as its future world headquarters before that plan was abandoned.

In addition, the Pugsley Park parcel was identified in the Port's plan as a possible site for a boutique hotel, for retail and restaurants, as well as a possible entertainment venue. All these uses would clearly improve the waterfront as a destination for residents and visitors alike. To date, there has been little progress evident in either of these sites and both remain available. At the same time, the Land Use Study clearly identified the City owned former Sugar Refinery site in the south end to be of interest to the Port and there are other opportunities for land swaps between the Port and the City that can facilitate agreement on a master plan for the waterfront.

It is interesting to note that an Inner Harbour Land Use Plan and Implementation Strategy was developed in 2003 by the then Saint John Waterfront Development Partnership which included the Saint John Port Authority, the Saint John Development Corporation and the City of Saint John, among others, working with well know Urban Strategies as their consultant. Its top priority at the time was to "provide increased public access to the inner harbour and Uptown Waterfront". An admirable objective that is still relevant today, if not yet achieved. Neil Jacobsen, the former General Manager of the Saint John Waterfront Development Partnership believes that the Inner Harbour Land Use Plan remains as relevant today as when it was created. Perhaps the Waterfront Development Partnership was simply just ahead of its time, but the need for a partnership to finalize a waterfront master plan seems even more relevant today.

#### • Community Leadership

Leadership at the municipal level is a critical factor for success in any effort to grow a community. Through discussions with Mayor Darling and CAO John Collin, I believe the necessary municipal leadership is now in place to ensure success, although the impending municipal elections represent

some risk to this continued leadership. The alignment between the City's administrative leadership and its political leadership has been crucial to the progress achieved to date. It appears that the current Common Council is well aligned to the need for a growth strategy and the on-going commitment to that growth strategy is critical to success. The efforts of Council to change the provincial tax structure as its relates to property tax sharing with the province and cost sharing with nearby suburban communities for common services, the recognition and commitment to grow the City's population and the decision to support a regional economic development agency all underscore the efforts of municipal leaders to change the future direction of Saint John.

The business community, as represented by the Saint John Region Chamber of Commerce (formerly the Saint John Board of Trade), has been a strong and vocal advocate for some time for the types of changes needed to grow the City more aggressively. The support of the business community is particularly important in terms of their willingness to invest in the City's future.

The provincial government under the leadership of Premier Higgs has signalled a willingness to reform municipal government and taxes to allow municipalities to have more control over their futures. Conditions at both the municipal and provincial levels appear to be right for the needed changes to allow Saint John to play a more important role in the economic development of the province.

#### • Focus on Entrepreneurship and Innovation

The development of entrepreneurial ecosystems is a common element of growing communities. Key to economic growth is a focus on developing the next generation of entrepreneurs in the City. Having innovation incubators is also important. Halifax has Volta Labs and Innovacorp, including its Cove incubation project for technologies and an innovation district in the heart of the downtown. In Charlottetown, the Start-up Zone is a business incubation organization supporting new entrepreneurs. The Bio-Alliance also provides significant incubator space for its sector. In Moncton there is Start-up Moncton. As confirmed by Jacqueline Hamilton, the City intends on designating an Innovation District around King's Square where UNBSJ's MBA program is located along with its Block One business incubation service.

#### Post-Secondary Sector

The importance of the post-secondary sector to the economy in Saint John is self-evident. The University of New Brunswick SJ and the New Brunswick Community College are not only important employers in the community, but also key sources of skilled talent and centres of innovation. The relocation of UNBSJ's MBA Program to King's Square (interestingly in the same building where I once had offices) plays an important role in entrepreneur development through its Block One initiative. The post-secondary institutions also play an important role in the attraction and retention of newcomers to the City, especially among the immigrant population. Saint John's post-secondary institutions are important partners in the City's economic development efforts and need to be represented in the development of the region's economic development strategy, as well as on the Board of the regional economic development agency.

#### Regional Health Services

Saint John plays an important role as a regional health centre, not only for the Southwestern region of the province, but the entire province for some specialities offered through the Saint John Regional Hospital, particularly its centre of excellence New Brunswick Heart Centre. UNBSJ's partnership with Dalhousie University to train doctors for the province is another important element of health care in Saint John. This sector is important to the City's economic growth and needs a voice at the table as well. It may be that this sector provides the basis of developing a bio-science cluster in the City in partnership with BIO-NB. In fact, there were early discussions about such a cluster with Rory Francis, the CEO of the PEI Bio-Alliance, in the last decade. According to Francis, that effort lacked a strong private sector proponent. Nonetheless, the components of such a cluster remain, and the model provided by the PEI Bio-Alliance underscores the opportunity associated with such a cluster, providing yet another possible building block for the City's (and Region's) economic growth.

#### Regulatory Environment

One of the greatest complaints of developers is the too often cumbersome process in the approval of proposed development projects. Developers require clarity of the rules, transparency in the approval process and timeliness.

In discussion with Jacqueline Hamilton, the City's Commissioner Growth and Community Services, it is clear that there has been significant effort to improve the regulatory processes related to permitting and development approvals in Saint John. Indeed, the City has been recognized nationally for these efforts. The development of Heritage By-Laws provides developers with clarity of expectations regarding the redevelopment of such properties. The affordable housing action plan under development further supports efforts to build an inclusive city. The City has worked hard to remove unnecessary regulatory barriers like the minimum parking requirements for new building projects. The creation of the "One Stop Development Shop" has helped streamline the approval process and focussed on a solutions oriented customer process. Training of staff and the implementation of service metrics have been completed. Renewal of building by-laws have further clarified the rules for development. The City's regulatory environment appears to be well in order and open for business.

#### Current Climate for Change

There are early positive signs of momentum in the revitalization of Saint John's urban core. There is a sense of optimism evident within the community based on recent construction activities in the Uptown area. The City has recently taken responsibility for the City Market and is in the early stages of developing a strategic plan for this important community asset. It is rumoured that a development proposal is being prepared for application for approval for 91 King Street which will provide an iconic development opportunity for the City on this key site in the Uptown. There is an on-going effort to remedy the nearly 300 vacant and unsightly properties in the urban core with about eighty being addressed in the past year alone. Streetscape investments are being made especially along key corridors in the City although this activity is severely limited by a small capital budget (about \$12 million this year not including provincial and federal government contributions, compared to \$30 million for the City of

Moncton, a similarly sized city). There is a modest incentive plan in place that provides rebates for certain types of redevelopment.

There are new residential development projects within the Uptown area creating several hundred new housing units on the peninsula. The recent announcement of government funding to shore up the sea wall and remediate the land in Fundy Quay to prepare the site for redevelopment is a positive step and potential game changer for the Uptown waterfront. This redevelopment would more than double the useable waterfront for the public and is an important building block to realizing the potential of the City's waterfront.

#### Infrastructure and Amenities

The competition for talent will only increase with time. Successful communities are those which provide residents with the services and amenities expected to have a certain lifestyle. That includes not only recreational amenities as well as green spaces and parks, but arts and cultural activities, and interesting places to dine. A safe and clean environment are now table stakes for those choosing a community to live. Major medical services and educational opportunities are key to relocation decisions. Green spaces and public gathering places are also important and there are efforts to improve these elements of quality of life as outlined in the City's Central Peninsula Secondary Plan. While there is more work needed to improve some of the people amenities within the Uptown area in particular, the Central Peninsula Plan has identified the improvements required for the most part. Clearly, more public amenities on the waterfront should be a priority. The Port has expressed an interest in creating such amenities on its Pugsley parcel, including the possibility of a boutique hotel on the site.

### **Regional Models**

As outlined, Saint John has many of the key building blocks in place to ensure the future economic growth of the City. There are three cities within the region that provide prime examples of the best practices needed to promote economic growth in the City of Saint John.

#### Halifax

There is really no better example of economic development success in Canada than Halifax. While Halifax has many advantages that Saint John does not have, including being a regional medical and financial centre, a higher educational centre, a government centre, a naval centre. At the same time, the municipality endured nearly a twenty year period where there were no commercial buildings built in its downtown core. The population was growing at a much lower rate than nationally. After amalgamation, the city had relatively weak political leadership for a sustained period of time. There was no strategy in place for the development of the city core. The approval process for development was cumbersome and slow. On the positive side, the economic development efforts of the four municipalities including the Cities of Halifax and Dartmouth, the Town of Bedford and the County of Halifax were amalgamated under a new public-private partnership that was originally called the Greater Halifax Partnership (now simply the Halifax Partnership). This effort was led by the then recently amalgamated Metropolitan Halifax Chamber of Commerce (now simply the Halifax Chamber of Commerce) of which I was its first chair and led that effort.

The Halifax Partnership was unique at the time as an economic development agency, as it was a partnership of both the public and private sectors. It has a largely private sector led board with the autonomy (and lack of political interference) and responsibility to grow the regional economy. Indeed, Halifax is the model for the economic hub strategy that I have been actively promoting. The Halifax Partnership has developed key metrics to grow the economy and is accountable to its funders (www.halifaxpartnership.com).

In my own experience, most economic development organizations do not have the appropriate measures of success to be held accountable for. I believe the Halifax Partnership represents an excellent model for the new regional economic development agency in Greater Saint John. I believe that the new agency should consider the private-public model of the Halifax Partnership. The private sector has contributed millions of dollars to the Partnership since its founding. It is understood that the new agency is anticipating a similar private-public partnership model and is currently undertaking a branding exercise. One weakness, in my opinion, is that the Halifax Partnership does not have the responsibility as the destination marketing organization for the City. The new regional economic agency for Greater Saint John includes tourism.

One of the key metrics of the Halifax Partnership is its population goal which is to increase the population to 550,000 by 2031 (+1.7% per year). Halifax was the second fastest growing community in Canada in the past year, growing by 2% (more than 9,000 new residents), and twice the national rate. It is noteworthy that the Halifax CMA was also first in job creation among the top 25 CMAs in the country with an increase of an additional 4,600 jobs during a pandemic. Another important measure is GDP growth, to grow the economy an additional \$30 billion by 2031 (+2.9% per year). In recent discussion

with their CEO, Wendy Luther, she indicated that extensive collaboration in the development of the Partnership's Economic Growth Strategy has been critical to the success of economic development for Halifax. The collaboration in the creation of its strategic plan means that the Partnership's goals become community goals adopted by other organizations in the community. The Partnership is about to undertake its next five year strategic plan.

. Another basis of success according to Luther is that economic development agency is in lockstep with the municipality in terms of the implementation of the Partnership's strategy.

In preparing its new five year strategy, the Partnership intends on taking a slightly different approach to planning by establishing themed working groups as a means of engaging more participants in the process, especially their private sector investors.

The basis for the Halifax Partnership's successful strategy to date has been the identification of the community's key assets and best opportunities to growth. The Partnership is currently focussed on five growth clusters.

- IT, Gaming and Digital Media
- Financial Services
- Ocean Technology
- Transportation and Logistics
- Health and Life Sciences.

The Partnership has done a particularly good job in reporting on its progress through the development of the **Halifax Economic Dashboard** and the **Halifax Index**. The Partnership has long recognized the importance of post-secondary institutions to economic development in the city. To that end, there has always been strong representation from this sector on the Board. Further, the Partnership has especially focussed on the important role that post-secondary institutions play in attracting immigrants to the City.

Indeed, in a study that was conducted by my former company of graduating university students, nearly two-thirds of foreign students indicated a desire to stay and live in the communities where they had studied after graduation. This presents an important source of well-educated immigrants to communities with post-secondary institutions across the region, including the City of Saint John.

The Partnership's highly successful **Connector Program** to assist newcomers to find employment is one that the Saint John's new economic development agency should emulate.

Another important aspect of Halifax's success is a change in municipal leadership in late 2012. Indeed, under Mayor Mike Savage's leadership, the renewal of the urban core (both in downtown Halifax and Dartmouth) has become a priority. Both downtowns have been transformed with a focus on increased residential population and the resultant densification of the urban core. Halifax is developing a waterfront that has become a destination for both residents and visitors alike. The announcement of a new Art Gallery on the waterfront and several new residential developments will only serve to increase the attractiveness of the waterfront as a place to live, work and play. This effort is led by Develop Nova Scotia (formerly the Waterfront Development Corporation), a provincial agency.

Saint John has, on a smaller scale, the same opportunity, but this will take a long-term vision to make the City's waterfront such a destination. Working with the Port of Saint John is key to this vision. The

City's urban core master plan must prioritize the waterfront as an opportunity for economic growth and the development of Fundy Quay represents a game changing moment in the City's history.

Halifax recently released its Centre Plan for Development which identifies more clearly the development parameters within the urban core, especially with regard to height and density restrictions. The plan is heavily policy oriented. While this has brought some clarity to the development progress, there continues to be complaints regarding the lack of timeliness of the approval process in Halifax which has been a source of frustration for the development community for many years. The Centre Plan envisions an additional 18,000 residential units within the centre plan area and 33,000 new residents by 2031. The Centre Plan (successor to HRM by Design) is a ponderous document (more than 250 pages) heavily focussed on policy direction and much less so on either inspiration or aspiration with regard to the future vision for the urban core. It is a document mainly for the development community.

Another important element of economic growth in Halifax is the focus on innovation and entrepreneurism. The Volta Lab (focussed on IT) and Innovacorp (including its Cove incubation centre for ocean technologies) are both dedicated to identifying and supporting new entrepreneurs and startups. Indeed, this focus appears to be in common with growing communities. Halifax has an innovation district in the downtown core to support these efforts.

#### Charlottetown

Prince Edward Island has been the model of economic growth for the region for the last decade or more and has led the region in GDP growth for the past decade or more. The Island has led the region in the number of new jobs created over the last decade, not just on a per capita basis, but in actual number of jobs created. Retail sales over the last decade have increased an average of nearly 4 percent a year, well above the national average. Building permits in Charlottetown proper have increased by over 100 percent in that same time frame, with the residential component increasing over 130 percent.

There are two key reasons for the Island's success. The first, and I believe the most important, relates to population growth. The Island is the only province in the region to grow its population at the national rate for the last ten years. It is also the only province in the region to match national GDP growth rates. The vast majority of that population growth can be attributed to immigration with most of that growth limited to Charlottetown and surrounding communities. Charlottetown has increased its population by over 12 percent in the last four years alone. Since 2010, the number of jobs in Charlottetown has increased nearly six thousand (17 percent).

The second reason for the province's success relates to the province's economic development strategy which has identified growth clusters for the province. For Charlottetown specifically, the focus has been on bio-technology and financial services as economic growth clusters. The development of bio-technology sector has been largely centred in Charlottetown. Indeed, as reported by the Bio Alliance of PEI, this growing sector now accounts for 2,100 jobs on the Island and more than \$300 million of economic activity, along with \$70 million in R&D expenditures. According to Rory Francis, CEO of the Bio Alliance, this sector is projected to grow and become the second biggest sector on the Island by 2025 in terms of GDP, with more than 3,000 jobs and revenues of \$500 million, mostly export oriented. This sector has become increasingly important to the recruitment and retention of immigrants to the Island.

The Bio-Alliance was only established in 2005 and the significant growth of this sector in PEI can be attributed the work of this dedicated sector organization, an important lesson to other communities wishing to grow their economies. Interesting, Francis indicated having met with representatives of the medical community in Saint John to discuss a life science cluster for the City about ten years ago. He continues to have interest in helping other communities in developing such a cluster and would be a great resource for the new economic development agency for Greater Saint John in this regard.

The other sector of focus for Charlottetown has been financial services, led by the more than 400 jobs created in the city by Invesco Inc. According to Penny Walsh-McGuire, the CEO of the Greater Charlottetown Area Chamber of Commerce, the city is increasingly dealing with a skilled labour shortage. The Chamber is also actively involved in a new province-wide effort called Partnership for Growth to help other more rural parts of the province benefit from Charlottetown's economic success.

The Chamber of Commerce has also played an important role in attracting and retaining young workers through their **PEI Connectors'** initiative, modelled after the Halifax partnership successful Connector Program, which helps newcomers and new graduates find work. There is also an effort to promote diversity and inclusion in the workplace which is key to ensure a welcoming environment for newcomers especially. The success of Charlottetown is clearly the result of collaboration between various public and private sector partners, a lesson for Saint John going forward.

In Charlottetown itself, there has been a housing boom for the past number of years, with low vacancy rates and housing availability as a consequence of the population increase. The downtown area is becoming more of a destination, with more amenities and services for consumers. The recently announced new library in the centre of the downtown further augments those services in the city's core. In speaking with City Planner Alex Forbes, he emphasized the ability of the City to quickly respond to and approve development applications as important economic development advantage.

The City of Charlottetown has a comprehensive planning document, Strategic Directions for Charlottetown, which was last updated in November of 2020. The focus of this plan has been on the so called 500 Lot area deemed to be the economic, culture and social core of the City. This plan is heavily policy driven and while having some aspirational elements, lacks the inspiration of the City of Moncton's plan. According to Ron Waite, the General Manager of the Charlottetown Area Development Corporation (CADC), the importance of benchmarking best practices and visioning have been key to Charlottetown's success. Efforts to revitalize the downtown have been led by the Downtown Business Inc. The development of a plan by the city's planning department for the Charlottetown waterfront has been critical to the revitalization of the downtown core. Recently, an Eastern Gateway Waterfront Plan was finalized to augment the transformation of the City's central waterfront between Confederation Landing and Victoria Park. The new plan includes a new roundabout on the city side of the Hillsborough Bridge to address one of the biggest intersections on the Island.

#### Moncton

The Moncton CMA has been the fastest growing community in New Brunswick for some time, driven by success with attracting newcomers to the area, immigrants for the City of Moncton especially, and inprovince migration of Francophones from Northern New Brunswick to Dieppe in particular. The City of Moncton (population of 71,889) is the same size as the City of Saint John (population of 71,364). Yet Moncton has outperformed Saint John on virtually every economic growth indicator for many years.

The Greater Moncton area has an established regional economic development agency like Halifax (3 Plus). Unlike Halifax, 3-Plus has not been as successful as intended, as each of the three cities have retained many of the economic development functions that should be part of 3-Plus. There continues to be a competition among the three communities for economic development as a result, including the creation of an arms-length economic development agency for Dieppe called Expansion Dieppe. Indeed 3-Plus has been a bit of a disappointment as a result and there are currently efforts to redefine its role to a more limited focus on entrepreneurism development and labour force planning according to Kevin Silliker, the City's Director of Economic Development. The CEO of 3-Plus, Susy Campos, acknowledges the challenges related to her mandate and also the need for a rebranding strategy for the organization.

At the same time, there is an on-going effort to develop a regional approach to marketing the Greater Moncton area currently being referred to as Moncton Global. According to Campos, the three cluster segments targeted for investment attraction are health innovations, transportation/logistics, and back office support for financial and insurance companies. The agency has a number of growth targets articulated in its Strategic Plan which are part of the Service Level Agreements with its three municipal funding partners which include:

- Real GDP growth of 3-4% per year
- Population growth of 1.5-2.0% per year
- Labour market growth of 1.0-1.5% per year
- Municipal tax base growth of 2-3% per year

According to Marc Landry, CAO of Moncton, the City's current key priorities include growing the tax assessment base, growing the population and retaining immigrants. He indicated that the focus on the urban core is key to the City's economic growth strategy.

The City of Moncton has an outstanding Downtown Core Community Improvement Plan which was released in 2017. It is comprehensive, aspirational and inspirational in its content. Its visual representations of the future of the city includes a focus on the Riverfront Park, a clear streetscape strategy and public gathering places, as well as a revised corridor and street realignment plan.

There two key goals associated with Moncton's downtown improvement plan: increase downtown tax property tax assessment (goal was an increase of \$108 million by 2023 and an increase of over \$90 million has already been achieved) and increase population growth in the downtown area (target of 2,068 new residential units over the next 20-25 years with 250 units already completed). A new residential development (St. Bernard's Square) was just announced that would add another 148 units to the downtown core. In my judgement, the population growth goal is too conservative given the labour force needs for the city. It is worth noting that the City of Moncton has a separate immigration website and its own immigration officer.

Key to the goal to increase the property assessment in the downtown as noted was the City's aggressive and proactive approach to this task which the City of Saint John should perhaps model. At the time, of the 119 acres available in the core, 51 acres were parking lots. There were three key steps according to Silliker to increasing the property assessment in the core. The first was to undertake a complete review of all properties in the core by examining the assessment value block by block. This allowed the city to identify the under-valued use of any property in the core. The second step was to talk with every property owner in the core to understand their intentions regarding their properties, whether they were buyers or sellers, interested redevelopment or in partnerships etc. The third step was to convene builder and developer sessions to help identify the barriers to development, improved development processes and facilitate networking among the developer community to promote further development opportunities. The city also identified problem buildings as early targets and worked directly with these property owners, a process similar to that currently underway in Saint John. The results speak for themselves.

There are important changes in both the urban cores of Dieppe and Moncton to create more vibrant and populated downtowns. In Moncton, the Avenir Centre appears to have been the catalyst for development that is now happening in the downtown core. The same was true in Halifax with the completion of the Halifax Central Library, followed shortly after by the Nova Centre, spurring private development in the downtown core. The development of Fundy Quay provides Saint John with the same type of catalyst.

## Leveraging the Saint John's Role as an Economic Hub

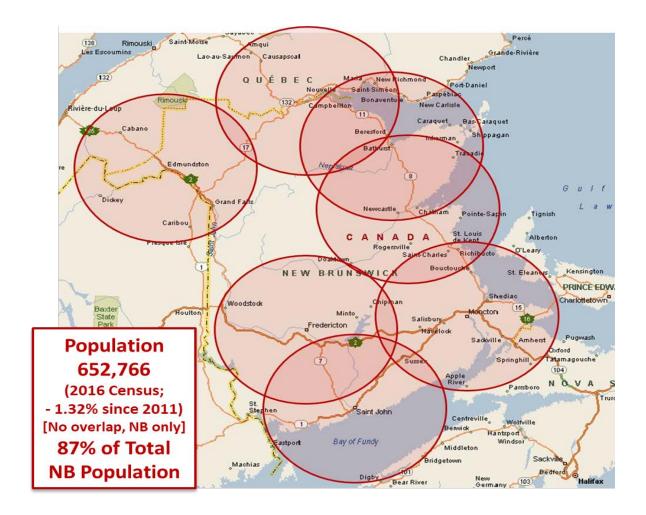
The City of Saint John serves a population of more than 165,000 within a radius of 65 kilometres of the city. Any economic development strategy must leverage this opportunity as an economic hub for work, for shopping, for public sector services, for entertainment and for arts and culture. Having an attractive urban core is key to that strategy. There is also the need for a marketing strategy to promote the services and amenities available to those living within the southwestern zone of the province.

The city is also an educational and medical centre to those especially in nearby communities outside the city proper and indeed other regions of the province.

The provincial government (both present and past) have been reluctant to adopt this economic hub strategy. This is understandable in a province where 44 percent of the population continue to live in smaller rural communities (communities with less than 5,000 populations). Many of these communities are unable to generate full-time, year-round work for their workforces and are overly dependent on seasonal work and social program supports. Many of these rural communities are slowly but surely losing their populations and tax bases. The key reason relates to a lack of employment opportunities in too many of these rural communities. It appears that politicians, especially those representing rural communities, are reluctant to adopt an economic hub strategy because they mistakenly believe it will disadvantage those rural communities. This is the opposite of the reality.

An economic hub strategy presents the opportunity to create more full-time job opportunities within a reasonable commuting distance and without the need to relocate for those living in nearby rural communities. This is case for the City of Saint John currently. The seven proposed hubs for New Brunswick (see chart below) serve 87% of the population of New Brunswick within 65 kilometre radius and 91% within a 75 kilometre radius. It also provides the opportunity to consolidate and improve the delivery of public services, like healthcare.

As an example, there are 23 general hospitals in New Brunswick, many of which have difficulty keeping their emergency centres open. Only the three cities in the South offered any speciality practices within their hospitals. By consolidating those hospitals into the seven regional hubs, it is possible to offer more speciality services that might be only available in larger centres and replacing those smaller regional hospitals with collaborative health centres. This approach is actually happening in the Sydney area of Nova Scotia, where two aging hospitals are closing, the services of the other two are being enhanced and the closed hospitals are being replaced by collaborative health centres. All four hospitals were within 20 minutes of each other.



It is critical that the economic hub strategy be concurrent with an alignment of the economic development agency in terms of geographic responsibility. In the case of the Halifax Partnership, their economic strategy encompasses all the urban, suburban and rural areas within the municipality.

The reluctance of the provincial government to adopt an economic hub strategy leaves a vacuum for economic development reform in New Brunswick. This vacuum has been partially filled by the Eight City Mayors group to their credit. Most Chambers of Commerce in the province also support this strategy. It is critical that the City of Saint John continue to be a vocal supporter of the economic hub strategy. The new economic agency is perfectly positioned to take the lead in this regard.

## **Key Challenges**

There are a number of challenges that have surfaced during the research for this project that need to be resolved.

#### Limited Fiscal Capacity

There continues to be a number of key barriers to economic growth in Saint John. One relates to the City's fiscal capacity to invest in the type of changes necessary for success. To the credit of the City, many hard decisions have already been made to manage the costs of the municipality, including the recent decision to close one fire station and reduce the number of fire fighters. The cost of both fire and police services continue to be high relative to other similarly sized communities according to EY Audit. The municipality already has the highest property taxes in the province and limited capacity to raise tax rates as a consequence. The province takes a disproportional share of property taxes relative to other provinces in the region. There is an urgent need for tax reform in the province and while that process is well underway, the outcome remains uncertain. Increased investment in the city, both residential and commercial, will add to the assessment roles for the City and increase tax revenue without the need to increase tax rates. Further, cost sharing with nearby communities for common municipal services has yet to be resolved and will need the intervention of the province to ensure fairness in the cost sharing formula. It seems clear that without formal amalgamation of the municipalities in the Greater Saint John, the sharing of regional services on fair basis will continue to challenging for the municipality.

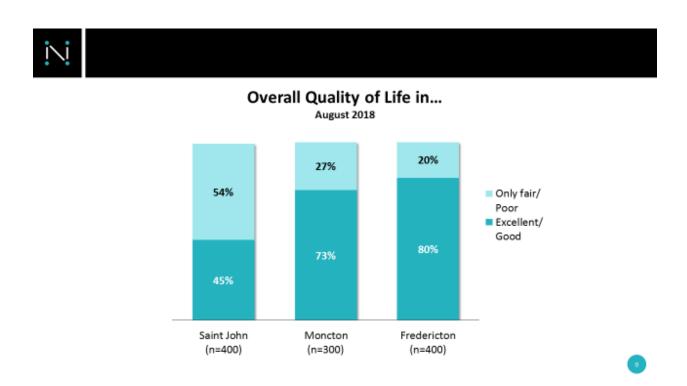
The City's tax generation ability is limited by legislation. There remains an opportunity to benefit from an annual dividend from Saint John Energy with a change in provincial legislation which would be helpful to the City's finances. It is understood, that only very recently, a voluntary hotel levy had been implemented to support tourism in the Greater Saint John area. A new by-law introduced in January made this levy mandatory and the revenues from this levy are intended to be available to the new regional economic agency to fund their tourism marketing activities. Unfortunately, the revenue from this levy will not be fully realized until economic conditions normalize for the accommodation industry which are unlikely until at least 2023.

The City is currently facing a \$435 million infrastructure deficit and a debt of more than \$200 million. The City has a small capital budget (\$12 million of its own funds which with federal and provincial contributions increase to \$30 million) which is mainly directed to existing infrastructure needs, leaving little for new investments in the City. For comparison purposes, the City of Moncton's capital budget is \$30 million (nearly \$90 million with federal and provincial contribution) and Halifax's capital budget is \$175 million before federal and provincial contributions. The City has an additional \$3-4 million is available for capital "pay-as-you-go" projects through its operating budget with a plan in place to increase this over time. The City is spending nearly all its capital budget on existing infrastructure. In Halifax, 75 percent of the capital budget is designated for existing infrastructure while 25 percent is dedicated to new infrastructure projects.

At the same time, the City's Ten Year Financial Plan produced in 2019 provides a clear path forward identifying both the challenges and opportunities to ensure a sustainable financial future for Saint John.

#### • Unfavourable Self-Image and Uncertain Reputation

Another barrier relates to the City's reputation as a place to work, live and visit, both among residents and visitors. A study conducted by my former company (Corporate Research Associates Inc., now Narrative Research), found the residents of Saint John had a much less favourable opinion of the quality of life in their city relative to their counterparts in Moncton and Fredericton (refer to graph below). There is a need to better understand the basis for this less favourable opinion of the City's quality of life. It is uncertain what the opinion is among those outside the city and there is effort needed to understand the City's reputation elsewhere in the province and the region.



There is clearly a need for investment in a marketing and public relations campaign for the City. This would include the use of a professional outside company with specific expertise in reputation management. For visitors, the attraction of the City is really focussed on the Uptown and waterfront. It seems apparent that the City needs to be re-positioned for economic growth and that a rebranding exercise is likely warranted going forward.

#### Dysfunctional Relationship with the Port

The economic importance of the Port to the City is undeniable and a key component of future economic growth. Commercial use of the Port, especially with regard to shipping and the cruise industry must be integrated with public use of the waterfront. Based on conversations with Jim Quinn, the CEO of the

Port of Saint John, it appears that the relationship between the City and the Port has been less than ideal in the past and there is a now a more urgent need to develop more of a partnership relationship with regard to the waterfront redevelopment. As an example, the CAO had indicated in conversation that there was a Waterfront 2040 initiative underway with the Port to envision the future of the waterfront. Quinn appeared to be unaware of this initiative, despite meetings between other senior Port management and City representatives on this topic. Nonetheless, Quinn stated he "will do anything to support the city" within his authority. It is noteworthy that the Port's CEO indicated having met directly with the CAO only one or two times since his appointment.

It is interesting to note that Quinn has recently relocated to the City proper where he grew up. Quinn indicated a willingness to consider a land swap with the City but was clearly unwilling to consider the redevelopment of Long Wharf for residential use given the continuing perceived need of the site for commercial purposes. The City's Central Peninsula Plan identified Long Wharf as a possible mix-used development opportunity, including residential. At the same time, the Port's CEO appear willing to facilitate public access via a walkway on the waterside edge along Long Wharf site when not in use for port activities and thereby extend the popular Harbour Passageway to Port La Tour. The need for strategic agreement of the redevelopment of the waterfront should be among the highest short-term priorities for the City, especially for the property between Market Square and the Marco Polo Terminal. Quinn suggested that the City might consider the creation of a Port District as part of its redevelopment plans for the Uptown and expressed interest in the Port developing public amenities closer to the cruise terminal on the Pugsley parcel .

#### • Immigrant Retention Challenges

The latest numbers indicates that New Brunswick has only a 50 percent retention rate for immigrants after five years. The numbers for the City are likely similar although currently unknown. While the Province has established a one year retention rate of 85 percent, it remains unclear what the five-year retention rate target is for New Brunswick. What is clear is that the City of Saint John (or perhaps the Saint John CMA) must establish its own retention targets and assign the responsibility for those targets to some organization. At the moment, it is not clear where that responsibility would reside. According to lan Fogan, Director of Strategic Affairs, the City currently provides about only \$25,000 in funding to organizations providing services to the immigrant community.

There are a variety of organizations currently involved in support of the immigrant community in Saint John including PRUDE, the Human Resource Council, the YMCA and the Saint John Multicultural and Newcomers Resource Centre among others. The Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) is a response to the growing need for systematic community planning around immigration settlement, integration and retention but has neither the mandate nor the resources to take responsibility for achieving retention targets. LIP is currently chaired by David Dobbelstyen, the City's Growth Manager.

With regard to the City's population growth strategy that will now become the responsibility of the new regional economic development agency, the issue of retention needs to be further addressed. Presently there appears to be too many players involved in immigration settlement and retention. While there has been a LIP position created to facilitate better coordination between the various agencies involved,

there is likely a need for a consolidation of these agencies into a single client facing agency to eliminate duplication of effort and provide a more efficient use of scarce resources. The Immigration Settlement Association of Nova Scotia may be a model for a **single service agency** (www.ISANS.ca). Although ISANS is now a provincial body, it is the result of a merger between two Halifax based agencies, the Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association (MISA) and Halifax Immigrant Learning Centre (HILC). ISANS provides a single, integrated suite of services to immigrants as well as employers seeking to diversity their workforces, including services like language and computer training, job seeking and placement advice, family counselling and relocation assistance. LIP's recent "New Residence Guide "is an example of a more coordinated effort to support newcomers to the City.

## **Priority Opportunities**

In a presentation to the Saint John's Board of Trade (now the Saint John Regional Chamber of Commerce) in the fall of 2018, I outlined the following recommendations as key to the City's future prosperity.

- Grow the population in the city.
- Develop a city specific immigration attraction strategy.
- Youth retention should be a priority
- Focus on quality of life opportunities, become a more liveable city.
- Continue the redevelopment of the Uptown area as an urban destination.
- Densify the Uptown by encouraging residential development.
- Lobby for shared cost agreement model.
- Embrace a regional economic development strategy.
- Consider the Halifax Partnership model.
- Improve air access regionally.

It seems clear that most of these recommendations are either well in progress or have been undertaken. To build on these earlier recommendations, I would like to focus on six priority opportunities for the City of Saint John.

#### 1 Population Growth – More Aggressive Targets Needed

While it is encouraging that the City of Saint John has experienced some population growth since the census in 2016, the pace of growth is well below that for other cities both nationally and regionally. The aging of the population and the exit of baby boomers from the workplace over the next decade will place increasing pressure on the availability of a skilled workforce to grow the economy in Saint John. A more aggressive population growth target is needed. I would suggest a **growth rate of 1% per year**. Last year, the City's population grew about half a percent. The new Greater Saint John Economic Development Agency will have responsibility for the City's population growth strategy. I would recommend that population growth targets be one of the key metrics used to judge the new agency's performance. I would also recommend that special attention be placed on developing a **youth retention strategy**, particularly aimed at new post-secondary graduates.

#### 2 Immigrant Attraction and Retention – Consolidation of Agencies Needed

It is increasingly clear that population growth is dependent on immigrations as the principal source of growth. While immigrant attraction will be the responsibility of the new economic agency through its population growth, the responsibility for retention of these newcomers is much less clear given the various different organizations involve in this activity. While the recent creation of the Local Immigrant Partnership to provide some coordination among these various organizations is a step in the right direction, there is a likely need for the consolidation of some of these organizations into a single entity to improve efficiencies and service delivery and eliminate duplication. The Immigrant Settlement Association of Nova Scotia, while a provincial body, may provide a model for the types of services needed in a single entity focussed on settlement and retention issues for the City. A **five-year retention** 

**target** for immigrants must be established and tracked. This effort will likely require some level of increased funding by the City to the organization charged with this responsibility.

## 3 Regional Economic Development Agency – Strong Performance Metrics Needed

The success of the newly created regional economic development agency will depend largely on the measurable outcomes of its yet to be developed strategic plan. The development of that plan must be as collaborative and inclusive as possible. The success of the Halifax Partnership's collaborative and inclusive approach to the development (and ultimately execution) of its strategic plan is an appropriate model to be followed. In addition to the various municipal partners, the development of the plan needs to include other important municipal constituents including the Chamber of Commerce, the post-secondary institutions, the healthcare sector and the Port of Saint John at a minimum. Further, the composition of the Board needs to include representation from these groups to more properly represent those impacting economic growth in the City directly. While the newly formed agency is currently undertaking a branding exercise, it might consider a delay in the final decision pending its strategic development work which is clearly its number one priority. It is important for the new agency to develop a set of metrics to be accountable. Indeed, the Service Level Agreement to be negotiated with the various municipal partners will require such metrics. I would recommend the following five to start.

- GDP growth over the next decade
- Population growth over the next decade
- Medium income growth over the next decade
- Job growth over the next decade
- Assessment growth over the next decade

As David Emerson, Special Advisor to the President of UNB noted, there is a need for a holistic approach to the strategic plan for the new agency, one that seeks collaboration based on common goals of partners. There needs to be better coordination between the function of the City's urban planners and the new agency's economic development plans. Like its counterparts in Moncton and Halifax, the key cluster segments for growth need to be identified in the development of the new agency's strategic plan. The example of the Bio-Alliance of PEI should perhaps be a model for the successful development of a cluster strategy. Their CEO is both interested and willing to be a resource in this regard. The new agency should also consider adopting the Halifax Partnership's highly successful **Connector Program** as a means of increasing immigrant retention rates in the City.

Finally, I understand that the intention is to become a private-public economic development, much like the Halifax Partnership. If this is the case, any branding decision should reflect this intention and I would suggest consideration be given to the **Greater Saint John Partnership** as a reflection of that intention and to leverage the reputation of the Halifax Partnership brand within Atlantic Canada.

#### 4 Revitalization of the Urban Core – Recasting the Plan to be More Inspirational Needed

The Central Peninsula Secondary Plan is a very comprehensive and detailed blue print for the long-term development of the City. The problem is the limited resources available to execute the plan for all parts of the peninsula simultaneously. Consideration should be given to prioritizing the Uptown and Waterfront areas. The focus needs to be on residential development to re-populate the urban core. The densification of the core is critical to the City's economic success. This is already happening and needs to be accelerated. Already there is evidence of younger residents moving into the Uptown which will help revitalize this area of the City. There may be some opportunities based on the EY Report for the City to use its own land holdings on the peninsula to promote development, especially related to affordable housing.

In reviewing the master plans for successful Atlantic Canadian communities, there is an opportunity to use the City's Central Peninsula Secondary Development Plan to provide a **more visionary look at the future of the urban core.** The plan itself is clearly both comprehensive and aspirational in nature. But it is not inspirational like Moncton's plan which provides a much more visual view of what their city can become. There is a need to use the current plan as a platform for visual or conceptual models of what the City could look like in the future. Moncton's plan should be the model for re-imagining Saint John's future to provide a sense of inspiration to both residents and those interested in investing in the City.

Promotion of the City's streamlined regulatory processes for permitting and development approvals to provide timely, predictable, fair and cost effective development decisions could be an advantage in the City's efforts to attract investment. The City needs to position itself as a **business friendly environment** and open for business.

#### 5 Relationship with the Port – A New Partnership Model Needed

The relationship between the City and the Port appears to have been somewhat dysfunctional for some time. The aspirational Waterfront 2040 project needs to be finalized as soon as possible. Agreement between the Port of Saint John and the City related to the long-term development of Port lands needs to be a higher priority. To that end, there needs to be a more **formal partnership between the City and the Port of Saint John**. Once agreement is achieved, the City should develop and release a visual concept of what the waterfront could become by 2040, these would include architectural renderings for the waterfront. This will build excitement among residents and business leaders about the future for the City. Perhaps the re-establishment of the former Saint John Waterfront Development Partnership and a renewal of the 2003 Inner Harbour Land Use Plan should be considered. The Port Saint John Land Use Study of 2011 provides clear opportunities for partnership with the City, especially for the Pugsley Park parcel and Long Wharf.

#### 6 Reputation Building – Repositioning the City for Growth Needed

The fact that the majority of residents in Saint John rate the City's quality of life as only fair or poor is both concerning and a barrier to the City's economic future. The basis for this unfavourable opinion needs to be further understand, as is the need to better understand the image and reputation of Saint

John as a place to live, work and visit for those in other parts of the province and region. There does not presently appear to be much support for marketing and communications within the City budget. With a regional economic development agency now in place, it falls directly to the City to begin to manage its own reputation. It will require financial support and commitment to build the necessary expertise to improve the City's reputation. This should start as a rebranding exercise for the City, similar to one undertaken by Halifax in recent years. There is a need to re-invent the City's image and provide the opportunity to re-enforce and build pride of place among Saint Johners. This will take a multi-year effort and will require strong community support, particularly among the business community. It will require the creation of a strategic communication function within the City's administration reporting directly to the CAO. It should be a measured activity based on pre-determined and desired outcomes. It will require the outside services of a marketing agency and a market research company.

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## The Million Dollar Question

The call for proposal asked for how best a million dollars could be invested in the future growth of the City. My advice would be to invest that money in a sustainable multi-year marketing and public relations campaign aimed at both residents and visitors in the region to re-position the City as a desirable place to live, work and visit, possibly including a re-branding of the City (i.e., **Saint John, Historic City by the Sea**). There is a need to change attitudes and opinions about the City. Such a campaign must be fact based and will require primary research to better understand current attitudes and opinions of both residents and potential visitors to the City, to identify opportunities to change attitudes and opinions that may currently reflect poorly on the City.

## Final Comment – Plan the Work, Work the Plan

The City of Saint John is excellent at planning. Beginning with the Inner Harbour Land Use Plan in 2003, the Plan SJ of 2009, the City Manager's Ten-Year Financial Plan of 2019, and the Central Peninsula Secondary Plan of 2020, there has been no shortage of relevant planning documents to guide the future development of the City. It is clear that the "plan the work" phase is complete. What is clear is that the pace of progress against achieving those plans has been painfully slow.

One overarching conclusion that I have reached in talking with various individuals for this project is that there is now an **urgency for action** and that the **pace of change** in the City needs to improve. In other words, the City must now "work the plan". I believe that part of the reason for this seemingly slow pace of change is that there has been a lack of accountability for measurable outcomes both within the City's bureaucracy and the external agencies funded by the City. At the same time and in recognition of the City's real financial restraints, the number of City priorities needs to be narrowed.

As an example, the City of Moncton set an ambitious goal in 2017 to increase the total value of property tax assessment in the urban core by more than \$100 million by 2023. There was a specific plan developed to achieve this goal and accountability assigned to those responsible for executing on this plan of action. That goal is likely going to be achieved by the end of this year, nearly two years earlier than expected. It seems clear that the City of Saint John must set equally ambitious goals for economic development with clear metrics and accountabilities.

The population growth goal for the City is another good example. The growth goal needs to double its current pace to 1% growth per year. That is why the new regional economic development agency must have such metrics. That is why there is a need for accountability for immigrant retention with a stated retention target. Finally, a key building block that is missing and is critical to the City's future is a mutually agreed upon master plan for the waterfront in partnership with the Saint John Port Authority. This should be considered an urgent priority for the City. The Inner Harbour Land Use Plan developed with Urban Strategies in 2003 by the Saint John Waterfront Development Partnership provides an excellent template for such an agreement and should allow for a fast track timetable for such an agreement between the City and the Port. It is time to "work the plan".

## **Appendix**

#### **Conversations Conducted**

Don Darling Mayor of City of Saint John

John Collin CAO, City of Saint John

Jim Quinn CEO, Port of Saint John

Paulette Hicks CEO, Greater Saint John Economic Development Agency

lan Hogan Director of Strategic Affairs

David Dobbelsteyn Growth Manager

Jacqueline Hamilton Commissioner, Growth and Community Service

Neil Jacobsen Former General Manager, Saint John Waterfront Development

Partnership

Marc Landry CAO, City of Moncton

Kevin Silliker Manager Economic Development, City of Saint John

Susy Campos CEO, 3-Plus

Ron Waite General Manager, Charlottetown Area Development Corporation

Penny Walsh McGuire CEO, Charlottetown Chamber of Commerce

Alex Forbes City Planner, Charlottetown

Rory Francis CEO, Bio-Alliance

Wendy Luther CEO, Halifax Partnership

#### **Documents Reviewed**

Central Peninsula Secondary Plan 2020

City of Saint John Population Growth Framework

City Manager's Report of Restructuring

**EY Operational Audit** 

Kitchen and Slack Report on Fair Taxation

**Move SJ Reports** 

Land Use Plan 2011- Port of Saint John

Inner Harbour Land Use Plan and Implementation Strategy - 2003

City of Saint John Ten Year Financial Plan- 2019

Prospectus – Regional Economic Development 2019

Sustaining Saint John – A Three Part Plan

New Beginnings – A Population Growth Strategy for New Brunswick 2019-24

Centre Plan – Halifax Regional Municipality

City of Moncton Downtown Development Improvement Plan

Charlottetown Waterfront Development Plan

Charlottetown Downtown Strategy



## **GROWTH COMMITTEE REPORT**

Report Date	April 08, 2021	
Meeting Date	April 13, 2021	
Service Area	Growth and Community	
	Services	

His Worship Mayor Don Darling and Members of the Growth Committee

SUBJECT: Municipal ENCORE Program: Open Streets Program Update

#### **OPEN OR CLOSED SESSION**

This matter is to be discussed in Growth Committee Open Session.

#### **AUTHORIZATION**

Primary Author	Commissioner/Dept. Head	City Manager
David Dobbelsteyn	Jacqueline Hamilton	John Collin

#### RECOMMENDATION

That Growth Committee receive this report for information.

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report provides a general overview of the *Open Streets* program and the future of the program post-pandemic. Due to changes to the mandatory order that do not permit outdoor events of greater than 50 people, the City will not be organizing any open street road closures in 2021. The City has developed a streamlined approach for community groups who wish to pursue community-based applications for open streets this year, provided they meet all public health requirements and have obtained the support of the residents and businesses in the immediate area. This report highlights what the City has learned from the 2020 open streets initiative and how it may inform future considerations for pedestrianization.

#### **PREVIOUS RESOLUTION**

Click here to enter any previous relevant resolution.

#### STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

#### **Growth & Prosperity**

Promote Saint John as a community to live, work and play to grow the residential tax base

#### **Vibrant City**

Invest in arts, culture and recreation experiences that create a sense of community pride.

#### REPORT

The City instituted the Open Streets program in 2020 in response to the pandemic. The goals of the program are as follows:

- to encourage members of the public to safely access businesses during the pandemic, and allow businesses to animate the streets in-front of their businesses;
- To gather data, and feedback on streets and locations that would be ideal locations in the future to temporarily 'open' to host large scale events, or allow for open-air markets, and other types of pedestrianization;
- 3) To streamline the process for closing streets to the public and opening them for pedestrian and active transportation access;
- 4) To create a simplified approval process for third parties to host their own open street events.

#### Discussion

Almost 14,000 people participated in Open Streets over the course of the summer of 2020 along the following streets: Canterbury St, Grannan Lane, Princess St, Prince William St, and Main Street West. The initiative brought residents and visitors of all ages onto the vehicular right-of-way, and created, as much as possible, a comfortable space for people to interact with the City's beautiful Uptown and the great businesses found in the area.

While the initiative did attract many people, the feedback from businesses was mixed. Some businesses saw noticeable increases in business, and were very excited by the program, and actively participated. Other businesses expressed concerns to the City that the road closure was impacting their businesses negatively, or they did not have resources to animate the space in front of their business. As much as possible, staff attempted to identify resolutions and adjustments to support the concerns raised by businesses.

This feedback should also be seen in light of the goals of the program, which was to attract some people, but not too many. The city's position is that no matter how large a gathering, there will always be opposition from some quarter. However, staff are of the mind that had the events attracted many more people, which was not possible due to Covid-19, that local businesses would have likely experienced larger economic spin offs. Staff also learned that is it very difficult to communicate with our business community en-masse. Businesses use a variety of means to communicate. The City attempted to regularly contact businesses by e-mail, phone, flyers, in-person, through social media, and via radio. Despite all

these efforts, there was always one or more businesses that was surprised to find their street closed on a Saturday. In the future staff recommend working more closely with our Growth Partners such as Uptown Saint John, the Chamber, or Envision Saint John, who deal directly with businesses and can assist with communicating with local businesses. Still and all, there will always be businesses that will be difficult to contact, and the more lead time that can be provided to businesses, the less likelihood of them being opposed or surprised by a street closure.

Feedback from the public was generally very supportive of open streets and pedestrianization with requests for additional animation, or bigger crowds being common. One theme that staff heard frequently was that communication was challenging with the model of rotating open streets. Staff recommended this to Council to allow more businesses to realize the benefits of the program, or to minimize any negative impacts. The feedback we received was that the public had difficultly keeping track of which street was 'open' on a given Saturday. If the City decides to implement the program again in the future, greater consistency will be important for the public and local businesses. The City also intentionally marketed the events at the 'last minute' so as to dissuade large crowds from attending or inviting more tourists from other parts of the province from coming to Saint John for Open Streets. In the future, Open Street events would be communicated well in advance to draw larger crowds.

Feedback from staff was that there was a lot of staff resources allocated to a project that by its design could not attract a lot of people. In the future, were the City to initiate open streets again, it should be post pandemic, when large scale public attendance would merit the municipal resources required to implement the program safely and successfully, and where larger crowds would have much more of a positive economic impact on local businesses.

Staff observed considerable improvements in streamlining the process for closing streets for events. Before the program, the process took upwards of 7 months. With the implementation of the program, the City also drafted a new bylaw implementing a special events task force. This task force, and new process saw applications for road closures processed as quickly as 10 business days.

The City's decision to implement the program, and then simplify the process invited third parties to host their own open streets. The Germain street open successfully used the new process, and Ethyl and Mary's hosted a brand-new event on Princess street. Third Party initiated open streets remains the ideal model into the future, with the possibility of City-initiated closures on a case-by-case basis.

#### 2021

The provincial mandatory order has changed numerous times since summer of 2020. At this current time, the mandatory order does not permit outdoor events of greater than 50 people. As such the City will not be organizing any open street road closures in 2021. However, the City is still open to receiving applications from third parties who want to host their own open street events this year, provided they meet all public health requirements and have obtained the support of the residents and businesses in the immediate area.

Staff had intended to conduct further public engagement in early 2021 on the opinions of Open Streets, which streets should be considered for pedestrianization in the future. However, the Saint John region went into phase red, which made meaningful engagement difficult, if all but impossible. As the City moved out of orange phase there were more pressing public engagements such as Move SJ and Fundy Quay that took priority. Staff still intend to solicit feedback from the public and businesses on the future of pedestrianized streets in in Saint John but recommend waiting until the end of the pandemic at the earliest.

#### 2022 and beyond

Staff anticipate strong demand from third party organizers to host large events on open streets beginning next year. The City's streamlined approach for approving road closures will simplify things for event organizers, and it is anticipated that this approach will invite more event organizers to host events that are meaningful to the public and create a more vibrant community.

If through the public engagement process, the City can identify streets that make sense for safety devices like gates or bollards, that could quickly be put in place and removed, the City may explore City initiated street closures, but that will likely be contingent on how third-party events are satisfying the public interest in pedestrianization, and whether or not there would be a need for the City to 'fill any gaps' in event offerings.

When the City issued a survey on the Open Streets program in June of 2020, over 67% of the 2200 respondents expressed interest in streets been pedestrianized long term, rather than simply for one day, or a weekend. The City will explore which streets are candidates for longer-term pedestrianization irrespective of any events being hosted.

Staff also envision rolling out an application for local open streets, also known as PLAY Streets in 2022. Post-Pandemic, the City anticipates that local areas of the City will want to celebrate more frequently, and this will be another means to build vibrancy in local neighbourhoods.

The integration of more pedestrian-friendly adjustments to streets was a widespread exercise during this global public health pandemic, and it has built greater awareness in business owners and residents on how our relationship with municipal spaces and streets can be altered. For Saint John, the 2020 open streets exercise has invigorated this discussion, and has created a platform for ongoing opportunities to test the community's interest and comfort to introduce street alterations for the benefit of commerce, culture, wellness, and quality of life. While staff are not prepared to define what those alterations could be, staff are excited to build-off of what we learned in 2020 and work with the community to introduce new opportunities.

Finally, it should be noted that the City is well-served to continue testing-out opportunities and monitor their effectiveness when it comes to economic and community impact. The City received feedback from the community that open streets was worth pursuing, and the City did its very best to deliver while accommodating concerns from the community. This motivation and eagerness to introduce new value to the Saint John community is an important feature of the lessons learned from the open streets exercise and should continue to be key feature of the City's ability to respond to future obstacles and opportunities.

#### SERVICE AND FINANCIAL OUTCOMES

As the City will not be coordinating city-initiated *Open Streets* in 2021 there is no additional cost to the City, and staff resources will be deployed to focus on the existing municipal workplan for 2021.

Staff envision additional programming to continue to be rolled out as part of the Municipal Economic and Community Recovery (ENCORE) Program this year and beyond.

Staff have developed a thorough vetting process for ENCORE programming. A broad-based staff team from multiple City departments evaluates all ideas and proposals based on guidelines set by Council prior to presenting them to the Growth Committee. Staff are also working with community organizations to deliver on third-party led ENCORE programming, where the organization:

- a) proposes programming that stimulates Economic and Community Recovery, meets the program criteria set by Council, and provides good value for tax dollars
- b) has a proven record and capacity to deliver on programming;
- has leveraged resources that can be brought forward so the City is not unilaterally supporting programming;
- d) has active program partnerships from other community organizations who agree to support the specific program;

The City is also open to unsolicited proposals from organizations that could lead ENCORE programming, but they would also be subject to the same rigorous evaluation criteria.

## INPUT FROM OTHER SERVICE AREAS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Staff from the City's Growth and Community Services Team, Strategic Services, and The City Manager's office were consulted for this report

## **ATTACHMENTS**

List attachments related to report.



## **GROWTH COMMITTEE REPORT**

M&C No.	MC 2021-10	
Report Date	April 09, 2021	
Meeting Date	April 14, 2021	
Service Area	Growth and Community	
	Services	

His Worship Mayor Don Darling and Members of Growth Committee

SUBJECT: Municipal ENCORE Program: Spotlight Arts Creative Community Economy Initiative

#### **AUTHORIZATION**

Primary Author	Commissioner/Dept. Head	City Manager
Kate Wilcott/David	Jacqueline Hamilton	John Collin
Dobbelsteyn		

#### RECOMMENDATION

Growth Committee Recommends to Common Council:

Whereas Common Council has implemented a Municipal Economic and Community Recovery (ENCORE) program to enable and accelerate local economic and community activity in response to the current public health pandemic,

Now Therefore Be It Resolved that Common Council direct the City Manager to implement and promote a pilot of the Spotlight Program, a development strategy mobilizing the skills and creativity of local artists to drive recovery of community and businesses within the city of Saint John.

Further Be It Resolved that Common Council direct up to \$21,600 to InterAction School of Performing Arts to be designated for the Spotlight Program from the funds already allocated to the Municipal Economic and Community Recovery Program from the Growth Reserve.

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

By bringing together community groups, residents, and businesses to celebrate neighbourhood vibrancy, identity, and liveability, the Spotlight Program will stimulate the local economy and create programs that will lead to long-lasting approaches for creative problem solving. This is a community-driven initiative for recovery.



A cross-departmental staff team assigned to review ENCORE program projects recommends the Spotlight project as an initiative that meets ENCORE's requirements to foster both economic and community recovery as well as meeting the guidelines as set by Common Council. City Staff members discussed the project with the Saint John Community Arts Board and Arts organizations with a background in placemaking, community development, and facilitation and received their endorsement for the initiative.

Staff recommends Growth Committee support the partnership of InterAction School of Performing Arts, Third Space Gallery, and Saint John Community Arts Board in the launch of a new, integrated approach to place-led development that will help residents and businesses meet the challenges brought on by the pandemic and lead toward a more equitable recovery.

#### **PREVIOUS RESOLUTION**

On May 25, 2021 Council Adopted the Municipal Economic and Community Recovery Program and allocated \$546,267.20 to be used for this program.

For brevity, staff refer to this program as the Municipal ENCORE Program

#### STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

#### **Growth and Prosperity**

"Saint John is recognized by residents and businesses as a positive and supportive city. We grow in a smart way and attract talent, innovation and opportunities so all people can thrive."

#### Vibrant, Safe City

"Saint John is home to unique, livable neighbourhoods that offer a variety of housing options and appropriate transportation choices. Residents celebrate our history, enjoy a variety of cultural and recreation activities, and appreciate our greenspaces and waterways."

This initiative aligns with the Council approved *Municipal Economic and Community Recovery [ENCORE] Program* 

#### REPORT

During the Spring of 2020, with the onset of COVID 19 across the globe, our sense of community was disrupted. Small and large businesses suffered, residents were ordered to isolate, and the arts lost its greatest asset: sharing inperson live performance.



These sectors moved quickly to online engagements. Businesses offered curb side pickup. Community organizations became hubs for online information sharing for food security, activities for families, and finding vital resources. Artists pivoted to online engagements, bringing live painting, theatre, music, storytelling, and dance to living room screens.

According to a study from the University of Florida's Centre for Arts in Medicine, the Arts are a powerful tool for community recovery, as they enhance coping, connection, and wellbeing through physical and mental health, social and emotional engagement, and by activating values such as resilience, empathy, and hope when we need them most in difficult times.

Creative placemaking is the act of people coming together to change overlooked and undervalued public and shared spaces into welcoming spaces when community gathers, supports one another, and thrives. This can include temporary activities such as performances and chalked poetry to permanent installations such as landscaping and unique art.

"Spotlight on Arts, Creative Community, Economy" is based on the Irrigate project out of St. Paul, Minnesota which was created to help stimulate and support businesses in St. Paul's main business corridor when a rail line was being constructed. Like other projects that arise in cities causing temporary disruption (development, pandemics, etc.), this caused hardship for businesses and residents. The City of St. Paul worked with an arts development agency to create a program partnering artists with businesses to connect and invest their energies in the community, leading to neighborhood vibrancy and liveability, engagement, and economic benefits.

With the support of Growth Committee and using the Irrigate Model toolkit (see attachment) provided by St. Paul's Springboard for the Arts, Interaction would pilot the Spotlight program in the spring and summer of 2021.

InterAction will outreach to established professional artists from across the city in a transparent manner, with support from Third Space Gallery and other professional arts organizations. The artists will participate in community engagement sessions and, with the aid of the city's Growth Partners, approach businesses to establish partnerships.

This is in no means an "ask businesses for sponsorship" but rather an "ask how creative placemaking can be used to support the business and community sectors" program.

Participating businesses would be involved in their project from the beginning, with the artist facilitator working with the owner/manager to create art that would foster public engagement. For illustration only, sample projects could include:



- A poet and mural artist collaborating with a neighborhood seniors' group to create a mural along Somerset Street near the Zesty Lemon
- A musician and designer collaborating with the Tool Library to build a popup stage in the Lansdowne Plaza for socially-distanced concerts
- A photographer working with Outflow and Uptown Saint John to bring large scale photos to construction fencing/hoarding.
- A landscape architect and a film maker working with restaurants to create an Open-Air Picnic Dining Room in a parking lot.

The art would be on display in the public realm for citizens to discover, thus insuring COVID protocols are in place and safety is prioritized. The lead organizations have stringent COVID protocols and will maintain all safety standards throughout the project.

Art may be temporary (spring/fall) or semi permanent, but all pieces would be created to withstand elements for the time of display and be easily accessible and safe.

The projects on display would build social capital by connecting neighbours and engaging residents with local businesses; increase small business vitality and prosperity; and change the narrative by supporting multiple projects leading to media stories about fun, exciting, and curious activities for all residents and visitors to enjoy.

Documentation and an extensive evaluation process are included in the program, and InterAction, in conjunction with staff, will report back to Growth Committee upon completion with results. This pilot could lead to a larger roll out of Spotlight in the fall and winter, as well as use during other instances deemed of benefit to the business, arts, and community development sectors. This documentation can also be used going forward to showcase the vibrant and exciting vibe of our city.

While the program will be facilitated by the community partners, staff can act as an advisory body, liaising with City departments, and aiding in connecting the three sectors. Staff will also connect with our local growth partners, including Uptown Saint John, the Chamber, Community and Neighborhood Associations, and the new Regional Economic Development Agency to ensure awareness, alignment, and solicit their assistance in promoting the program.

### **Council Approved Municipal ENCORE Program Objectives**

- A. All investments must be evaluated through the Recovery Program Evaluation Criteria;
- B. Align with the City's Economic and Community Recovery efforts;
- C. Receive policy-level approval from Growth Committee and Common Council for distribution;



- D. Support the City's efforts to enable employment, population, tourism and tax base growth;
- E. Support programming in the commercial and cultural districts most impacted by COVID-19;
- F. Support recovery funding programming from today until 2021, while adhering to varying degrees of social distancing;
- G. Attempt to leverage additional funding, partnership and innovative programming from the community, private sector and federal/provincial through the municipal investment;
- H. Focus on municipal programming, assets, facilities and investments;
- I. Focus on areas of municipal authority

#### **Council Approved Municipal ENCORE Program Criteria**

- 1. Support increase volume of potential customers/clients in commercial district (hotels, restaurants, retail, non-profits, arts and culture organizations, etc.);
- 2. Support the largest quantity of impacted organizations/businesses and uphold fairness in program delivery;
- 3. Internal capacity to support and execute initiative;
- 4. Ability to easily pilot option to assess expandability or discontinuation;
- 5. Affordable to implement from a goods and services perspective;
- 6. Option must ensure the safety of users;
- 7. Relative feasibility of implementation (authority, public engagement, procurement, planning, staff time, approvals);
- 8. Initiative must be temporary and cannot result in recurring expenses for the City of Saint John.

#### SERVICE AND FINANCIAL OUTCOMES

Council approved up to \$546,267.20 to be used for the *Municipal ENCORE Program* from Growth Reserve. Council allocated \$100,000 in funds towards a first suite of initiatives in the summer of 2020 including: Open Streets, the Night Market; Pop Uptown Park; Loyalist Plaza; Artistic Picnic Tables; and 15-Minute Parking Spaces and \$35,000 in 2021 to the uptown parking initiative.

Staff will also draft a Memorandum of Understanding with InterAction to outline the details, outcomes, financial and reporting requirements of the initiative.



#### INPUT FROM OTHER SERVICE AREAS AND STAKEHOLDERS

This report has been drafted in consultation with Growth and Community Services, Strategic Services, the City Manager's Office, and the Saint John Community Arts Board.

Staff also received letters of support which are included as attachments.

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

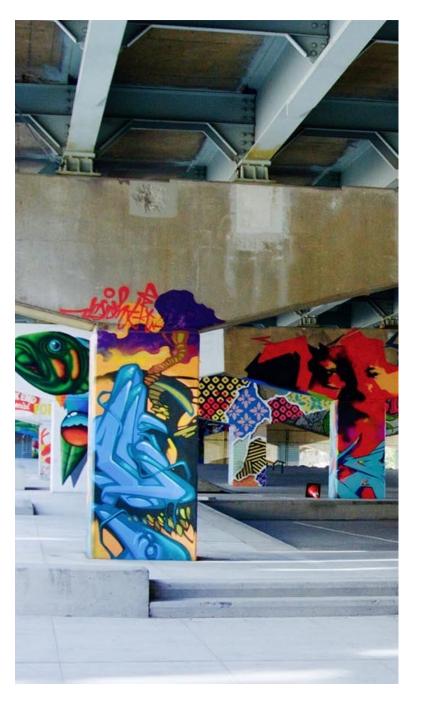
Spotlight PowerPoint
Arts Board Letter of Support Spotlight PDF
Carleton Letter of Support Spotlight PDF
InterAction Proposal Spotlight PDF
Third Space Letter of Support Spotlight PDF
Irrigate Toolkit PDF

# IMPLEMENTING THE SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE

SUMMER FALL WINTER 2021

Spotlight is a community development strategy that mobilizes the skills and creativity of local artists to create innovative, meaningful, authentic solutions to our local challenges.





People turn to the arts in challenging times because they help us to heal, to share stories, to make meaning, and to drive collective action and social change.

## **CREATIVE PLACEMAKING**



## WHAT IS SPOTLIGHT?

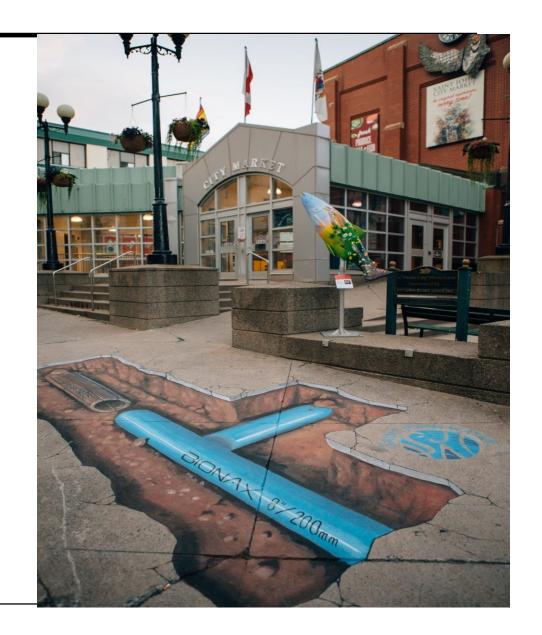
SPOTLIGHT IS AN ARTS LED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PILOT PROGRAM BASED ON THE IRRIGATE PROJECT FROM ST. PAUL MINNESOTA.

ARTISTS +
BUSINESSES +
NEIGHBOURHOODS +
CREATIVE PLACEMAKING



Impact of engaging local artists in addressing community challenges:

- -BUILD SOCIAL CAPITAL
- -CHANGE THE NARRATIVE
- -INCREASE SMALL BUSINESS VISIBILITY AND PROSPERITY





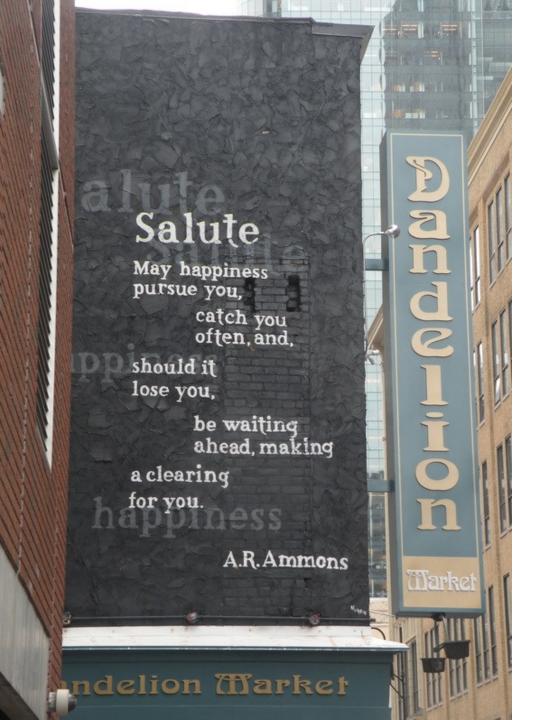
BY BRINGING TOGETHER COMMUNITY
GROUPS, RESIDENTS, AND BUSINESSES TO
CELEBRATE NEIGHBOURHOOD VIBRANCY,
IDENTITY, AND LIVEABILITY, THE
SPOTLIGHT PROGRAM WILL STIMULATE
THE LOCAL ECONOMY AND CREATE
PROGRAMS THAT WILL LEAD TO LONG
LASTING APPROACHES FOR CREATIVE
PROBLEM SOLVING.

THIS IS A COMMUNITY DRIVEN INITIATIVE FOR RECOVERY.



The art would be available in the public realm for citizens to discover, thus insuring COVID protocols are in place and safety is prioritized.

The lead organizations have stringent COVID protocols and will maintain all safety standards throughout the project.



# **Sample Projects:**

Poet + Seniors in Crescent Valley + Mural Artist + Small Restaurant+ City of Saint John = Large Installation of Poetry on Somerset Street

Theatre Artist + Carleton Community Centre + New Brunswick
Museum= Participatory Walking tour of Lower West

Musician/Techs + Tool Library + Lansdowne Plaza = Pop up concert stage

Photographer + Outflow + Uptown Saint John = Photo exhibits on Street Corners

Dance Artists + Queen Square Farmers Market + Musicians = Pop Up participatory dance

Landscape Architect+ Port + Film maker + Uptown Restaurants= Open Air Picnic Dining Room

# **Artist Outreach**

**Arts Organizations** 

Neighborhood Associations

Cultural organizations

**Craft Council** 

Galleries

Arts NB

# Workshop Facilitation

**Arts Organizations** 

Neighborhood Associations

City of Saint John

# **Business Outreach**

Uptown Saint John

Chamber

Local business associations and organizations

# **Project Implementation**

City of Saint John (permits, street closures, COVID plans, etc)

Neighbourhood Associations

**Schools** 

Day Camps

**Senior Centres** 

	Time Line:
• April	Key Partner Organization launch
• May	Saint John Specific Tool Kit is Created; Artist Workshop invitation is released Contact all Arts Orgs, Artist Associations, etc.; On Line meeting info session
<ul> <li>Early June proposals</li> </ul>	Engagement Workshop(s) take place; Artists are invited to submit their project
Mid June	Artist Proposals are Juried; Contracts Signed;
• June-September	Projects created and animated
September-October	Project evaluations and Reports
End of October	Celebration





Chair/President
Joanna Killen

Vice-Chair/Vice-president
Lisa Hrabluk

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-Chair Suping Shi

Darren McLeod
Tim Blackmore
Councilor Donna
Reardon
Abigail Smith
Councilor David Hickey
Lea St. John
Dahlia Das
Mostafa Aboeineil
Kara Au
Laura Oland

Arts and Culture Coordinator Kate Wilcott

<u>Address</u>

P.O. Box/C.P. 1971 Saint John, NB/N-B E2L 4L1

Tel: 658-4455 kate.wilcott@saintjohn.ca

\*Logo based on City Hall sculpture "Progression" by Claude Roussel, CM, ONB, RCA April 07, 2021

Growth Committee, City of Saint John

Subject: Letter of Support from Saint John Community Arts Board toward implementing the Irrigate Model for Recovery

Dear Sir/Madam,

This is to advise that the Saint John Community Arts Board is fully supportive of the initiative proposed in the Irrigate Model for Recovery and looks forward to being the advising body and promoter of the process and the celebration of the projects throughout the City. In addition to this in-kind support, the Arts Board is willing and able to contribute a limited portion of funds towards the initiative, the exact amount of which will be determined by the Board in the pear future.

The Board's support is resolute since this initiative adheres to the City's Arts and Culture policies, including but not limited to the following:

5.1 Accessibility and Participation in the Arts for all Saint John residents:

Support community-based arts and cultural projects in all areas of Saint John; encourage access to arts and culture that support the arts and cultural events in all areas of Saint John that celebrate the diversity of Saint John's communities and lifestyles.

5.2 Strong Arts and Culture Infrastructure:

Encourage the development of both new and established arts and cultural organizations that support artists and arts workers at all levels; facilitate networking, communication, information exchange, and collaboration between arts practitioners, art and cultural organizations, and the arts education sector.

5.3 Unique and Stimulating Environment:

Promote and expand a broad range of public arts programs; facilitate and promote events and performances in public spaces; and encourage arts and culture as a part of significant new developments and regeneration programs.

6.1 Partner in the Arts:

Participate with and help to coordinate the activities of a wide range of active Saint John arts and cultural groups, organizations, and individuals.

7.8 Integration with other City Planning and Initiatives including economic growth strategies

This program is also in line with Municipal Plan policies such as:

AC-12: Facilitate networking, communication, information exchange and collaboration between local arts practitioners, arts and cultural organizations, and the arts education sector

AC-22 Encourage hosting events and performances in public spaces

AC-26 Invest in Arts and Culture to support its role in economic development

AC-27 Work with other groups and city businesses to identify opportunities to increase investment in local arts and culture and to encourage collaborations between arts and business sectors.

The Saint John Community Arts Board looks forward to this initiative with enthusiasm, and anticipation of its positive impact in bringing together local artists, organizations and citizens in a meaningful connection that will benefit our community.

Thanks and Regards,

Joanna Killen

Chair, Saint John Community Arts Board



Attention: City of Saint John Growth Committee

The Carleton Community Centre fully endorses the proposal made by the Growth and Community Services Department for a community development strategy that mobilizes the skills and creativity of local artists that is connected to our neighbourhoods.

The community centres long term vision for the Lower West neighbourhood is a liveable community that is thriving; one where residents feel valued and no one is left behind. I am confident that at some point, everyone has walked by a space in their neighbourhood and thought "that should be.." or "wouldn't it be cool if..". This project will enable creative approaches to overlooked and unsightly spaces. I believe this is a step in the right direction for creating a liveable neighbourhood where residents feel pride.

Carleton Community Centre looks forward to further investment in all community service componenets because it's the catalyst to population retention and growth. This proposal is a very worthy opportunity during a time where residents would really benefit socially and mentally.

Sincerely,

Dustin Leclerc Executive Director Carleton Community Centre



April 6, 2021

Growth Committee City of Saint John

InterAction School of Performing Arts would like to request a \$21,600.00 grant from the city's growth reserve in support of the Spotlight Program.

The Spotlight Program is based on Irrigate, a project originating in St. Paul, Minnesota that used creative placemaking to build social, increase business visibility and viability, and ultimately change the narrative of the city during a time of upheaval. Spotlight will adopt Irrigate's template in Saint John and create six arts-based projects that will feature collaborations between artists and community groups, resulting in original works that will showcase our city, our artists, and the businesses and community groups that exist within our boundaries.

As a local arts organization with ties to several local community organizations, schools, businesses, and artists, InterAction School of Performing Arts is an ideal candidate to facilitate this program. The school has a history of creative placemaking, finding unlikely spaces throughout the city to host arts events. From theatrical retellings of the War of 1812 on Martello Tower to impromptu noon-hour concerts in front of Backstreet Records, InterAction understands the value of creative placemaking for artists, communities, and businesses.

With fifteen teaching artists and arts administrators currently on staff, InterAction has the capacity to train potential artists via workshops, as well as set up collaborations with community groups and businesses in the region. Workshops would serve two purposes; to build capacity for local artists in the area of project proposal (all artists will submit proposals for juried consideration), and also set up potential collaborations between artists. Ideally, the Spotlight project will result in increased collaborations between artists in the region, building lasting relationships that will take our arts community to new heights.

InterAction will leverage its connections with community organizations and businesses to ensure the projects are both viable and visible. The school has a history of working with groups such as the Teen Resource Centre, the Queen Square Farmers Market, Friend of Seaside Park, Saint John Newcomers Centre and PALS to ensure successful delivery of arts based projects, and will reach out to organizations throughout the city in



the spirit of partnership and collaboration. Working with partners will not only help increase help spread the word about the Spotlight project, it will also serve as a low-risk on ramp for community groups to engage with local artists, which will increase capacity and help promote future collaborations. It will also help draw more eyes to the community groups and businesses that participate in the project, which will help spread the word about their products and services.

The initial Spotlight project will feature six arts-based collaborations with community groups and businesses in Saint John, and will act as a pilot for future phases of the project. InterAction will not only administer Spotlight from an artistic and logistic standpoint, it will also collect data to measure its success. The reports collected from artists, community stakeholders, and community partners will help guide Spotlight as we move forward with future iterations of the project.

A successful Spotlight project will benefit Saint John in several areas. Increased foot traffic to different areas of the city will help benefit businesses, and also highlight unique areas that don't often receive attention from citizens. The project will also increase collaborations between businesses, community groups, and artists, encouraging people to not only shop local, but to hire local artists and support local community groups. It will also provide local artists some much needed financial shot in the arm, as all participating artists will be financially compensated for their work. The arts sector was hit especially hard during the pandemic, and projects like this can mean the difference between pursuing your art locally, or moving to a larger centre.

Please see below for a proposed project budget. InterAction will donate meeting space and rehearsal space in support of the project.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Chuck Teed

**Executive Director** 

InterAction School of Performing Arts



# Spotlight Proposed Budget

## Number of Artist Projects - 6

### Staffing

Project management, design, workshop facilitation Evaluation	\$6000 \$1800
Artist training	
Outreach and artist recruitment	\$600
Collaborating organization support	\$1200
Artist workshops (space rental, supplies, hospitality)	\$1200
Artist projects	
Project stipends (includes materials)	\$9000
Overall marketing and events for artist projects	\$3000
Total	\$22800
InterAction's In-Kind Contribution (space rental)	\$1200*
Total Ask from Growth Committee	\$21600

<sup>\*</sup> The \$1200 donation is a minimum donation that just includes meeting space. The rehearsal space donation is an additional donation that will fluctuate in value depending on how many artists utilize the space.



March 30, 2021

City of Saint John Growth Committee,

I am writing in support of the proposed Irrigate Model for Recovery. Third Space is built on collaboration and community partnership and this project echoes our values: focus on local artists, define 'artist' broadly, collaborate cross-sector, and pay artists fairly. For this reason, Third Space is committed to providing guidance and support for including visual artists in this initiative whenever possible. This project will benefit local artists by providing paid work, it will benefit local community organizations and businesses that want to work with artists, and it will benefit residents of Saint John by integrating the arts into everyday life in the city.

THIRD SHIFT, our annual Contemporary Art Festival, aims to offer Saint John residents a unique opportunity to re-imagine their city, activate vacant and under-utilized areas and engage with their surroundings. The festival, now in its seventh year, comprises multiple days of programming including artist workshops, talks, and screenings, in the month of August. In all of our programming, Third Space is committed to creating, facilitating, and supporting paid opportunities for artists in the region. It is my belief that the proposed Irrigate Model for Recovery is a great way for Saint John to continue this collaborative, cross-sector work on a larger scale.

If this proposal is recommended, I will be eager to connect with the participating organizations to offer assistance whenever possible, either through a partnership with THIRD SHIFT or through regular Third Space programming.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Buckley

Executive Director
Third Space Gallery

tiersespace@gmail.com



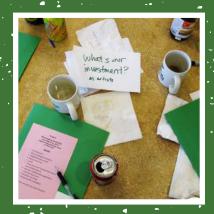






A TOOLKIT FOR MOBILIZING LOCAL ARTISTS
TO SOLVE CHALLENGES IN YOUR COMMUNITY







Springboard for the Arts is an economic and community development organization for artists and by artists. Springboard for the Arts' mission is to cultivate vibrant communities by connecting artists with the skills, information, and services they need to make a living and a life.

Irrigate is an artist-led creative placemaking initiative pioneered in Saint Paul, MN through a partnership of Springboard for the Arts, the City of Saint Paul, and Twin Cities Local Initiatives Support Corporation. In Saint Paul, Irrigate is supported by ArtPlace, Central Corridor Funders Collaborative, F. R. Bigelow Foundation, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Rosemary H. and David F. Good Family Foundations, The Kresge Foundation, The McKnight Foundation, and The Saint Paul Foundation.

The Irrigate Toolkit is made possible through partnerships with the City of Saint Paul, and Twin Cities Local Initiatives Support Corporation, and with generous support from ArtPlace.

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## **ARTPLACE**

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# **ARTPLACE**

Dear Reader,

ArtPlace America is proud to support Irrigate as a unique example of the scope and scale of impact that creative placemaking can have within a community. We commend Springboard for the Arts, Twin Cities Local Initiative Support Corporation, and the City of Saint Paul for combining forces to support local artists' contributions to their built environment.

Beyond its outcomes, Irrigate poses an elegant solution to a problem that nearly all communities face at some point in their life cycles. Disruption is ubiquitous, whether in the form of transit improvement, building construction, or acts of nature; and it can significantly hamper activity in and perceptions of an affected area. The arts can dramatically offset such impacts and, as in the case of Irrigate, turn disrupted locales into destinations.

We are excited by Springboard's willingness to share the process behind Irrigate with a broader audience, and hope that this toolkit will serve as a reference for anyone seeking to help artists serve their community. Our dream is not to promote carbon copies of Irrigate nationwide, but to instead provide inspiration for you the reader to develop your own innovative solutions to the challenges faced by your community.

Sincerely,

ArtPlace America

# A Letter from the City of Saint Paul



Fellow Community Leaders:

Mayors, city councils and other policy makers throughout America are constantly leading and guiding change in their communities. This effort is always demanding but when large infrastructure projects, economic development initiatives, or natural disasters are layered on top of that change, it can be all the more challenging to bring about the sort of positive results we are looking for. Such was the case for Saint Paul with the construction of the \$1 billion Green Line light rail project, the largest infrastructure project in the history of Minnesota and one that linked the downtowns of Saint Paul and Minneapolis along a historic stretch of commercial and residential property in Saint Paul. While widely supported, the construction of the line was to bring tremendous change to an area of Saint Paul that had experienced failures of planning and community involvement when the I-94 freeway was built decades ago, damaging long established and prominent neighborhoods in the process.

In response my office initiated a collaboration with Twin Cities Local Initiative Support Corporation and Springboard for the Arts during the planning stages of the Green Line to create Irrigate, a creative placemaking initiative. The idea behind this pioneering effort was to engage artists, residents, businesses and policy makers in shaping the change that was coming to the area and thereby demonstrate that creative people could drive economic development and community engagement rather than simply augment it. The result has been impressive, with businesses adding art and creative thinking to their business plans, residents realizing greater ownership in their neighborhoods, and artists reaching new audiences.

This is why several other municipalities around the country and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development have all begun using versions of Irrigate in their own efforts to manage change and build a stronger future, more rooted in the needs of their neighborhoods, and reflecting the importance of the creative community to our sense of place. It's hard for me to imagine what the Green Line corridor would have looked like without the efforts of our Irrigate partners, and I encourage you to take from this pioneering work the tools you need to lead change in your community.

If you have any questions, please contact the city's Director of Marketing, Jake Spano at 651-266-8527 or via email at jake.spano@stpaul.gov.

Sincerely,

Christopher B. Coleman Mayor, Saint Paul, Minnesota

Christyle D. Coleman



Dear Community Leaders,

The best community development is community-driven. It is led by residents and neighborhood businesses. It reflects their hopes, dreams and desires; who they are and what the want to be, both as individuals and as a community.

Community development results in development – individual development, social connections, physical transformation and economic gains. It helps residents feel better about themselves and their neighborhood. It forges connections between neighbors and with visitors from outside the community. It results in visible, physical change. There are real economic benefits for residents and businesses.

Irrigate is an outstanding example of community development at its best. It is driven by community members who are artists. It has changed how people think and feel about themselves and each other. It has affected how residents and visitors alike perceive the neighborhood. It has lead to visible enhancements to the physical landscape and real economic benefits for artist-residents and businesses.

Irrigate is "proof of concept" that artists, the arts, culture and creativity - assets that exist in every community - can lead community development efforts to help both people and places prosper.

The Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), the nation's largest community development support organization, is proud to have partnered with the City of St. Paul and Springboard for the Arts on Irrigate.

LISC has helped neighbors build stronger communities for over 30 years. The impact Irrigate has had in St. Paul is inspirational. We are excited to share this tool kit with you in hopes it will help you in your community. We look forward to hearing how your arts-based efforts help neighbors build communities.

Erik Takeshita

etakeshita@lisc.org

651.265.2295



# Chapter 1: Introduction

# COMMUNITY CHALLENGE + LOCAL ARTISTS X MULTIPLE SMALL PROJECTS

# **NEW NARRATIVE & NEW SOCIAL CAPITAL**

















## a. What is Irrigate? What's the impact?

Cities and neighborhoods need creative thinking. Particularly when communities are facing big challenges, artists see opportunity in challenge, beauty in chaos and have practical skills and creative thinking that can draw people and attention to an issue or a place.

When you mobilize local artists to connect and invest their energies in their own communities and neighborhood, you can impact:

- Neighborhood vibrancy and livability
- Neighborhood identity and community narrative
- Engagement among diverse members of the community
- Local economy and business visibility
- Transit-oriented development
- · New, lasting approaches for creative problem solving

Irrigate is a community development strategy that mobilizes the skills and creativity of local artists to create innovative, meaningful, authentic solutions to local challenges. Artists are a resource that all places have, but are typically left unrecognized and undervalued. Irrigate is a mechanism for cities, neighborhoods and small businesses to engage with artists to benefit the whole community through multiple artist-led collaborative projects.

### Impact:

The goal of artist projects that come from Irrigate is that by creating multiple small moments of surprise and joy and relationships, we can signal to neighborhoods that change

is possible, that the people who live there can engage in and direct this change, and that their place is valuable and worth tending. Together dozens or hundreds of small projects build ownership and agency for the people who share a place. Irrigate is about revealing what's possible and providing an outlet for positive and productive action.

There are three primary impacts when you engage local artists in addressing community challenges:

I. CHANGE THE NARRATIVE: By supporting multiple small projects you create opportunities for people to have positive experiences of a place and for increased positive media coverage and visibility. Projects led by local artists show a community that they themselves have agency and impact. Multiple media stories about fun, exciting and curious activities change the narrative from how difficult or



Bunting Boosters: Celebrate Where You Are Flags designed by artist Angela Sprunger with community participants and installed on a vacant car dealership meant to spark imagination and welcome light rail. Photo by Peter Haakon Thompson

# Why work with local artists?

- Taps into an existing asset in your community
- Builds lasting relationships based on action and engagement
- Brings creativity, innovation and unusual solutions to challenges
- Interactions and results reflect the culture and people of a place

### Introduction .

challenged an area is to how much it has to offer – to its own residents and to people and businesses you want to attract.

- 2. BUILD SOCIAL CAPITAL: By connecting neighbors in new ways and engaging residents with local businesses through collaborative processes, Irrigate builds a stronger network of social capital amongst a wide diversity of people.
- 3. INCREASE SMALL BUSINESS VISIBILITY AND PROSPERITY: By creating projects that draw people and attention to small businesses and commercial nodes, Irrigate helps these important independent businesses remain viable and helps attract new businesses.

### b. Core principles

Though this tool is designed to be customized to your specific context, critical to its success are these core values and principles:

• Focus on local artists. Artists are in every neighborhood, on every block. These are people who know the place, love the place, and will use their creativity to tap into a place's potential and opportunities. An invitation and a charge to artists to use their creative skills to help their own neighborhood produces

## History of Irrigate

Springboard for the Arts, the City of Saint Paul and Twin Cities Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) developed Irrigate as an artist-led creative placemaking initiative. This unique cross-sector partnership came from the City's desire to better leverage the creative skills of their residents and to work on disruption mitigation during major infrastructure development (the building of a Light Rail Transit line) in a new way. We knew that the traditional ways of addressing this kind of community challenge (community meetings, town halls, marketing consultants) have not been very successful. How could we think differently about this challenge, and what assets already existed in the community? Our goal in developing Irrigate was to use the period of disruption to build a parallel infrastructure of relationships and social capital that would outlast the construction chaos. The project was developed using Springboard's history and expertise in artist training and community problem solving, LISC's expertise in bricks and mortar community development, and the City of Saint Paul's expertise in policy and planning.

Irrigate is both an invitation and a charge to the creative community to engage with their neighborhoods and provides a common cause that has proved incredibly motivating to artists. We conducted Irrigate over a 3-year period, engaging over 600 artists in the training and supporting over 150 collaborative placemaking projects between artists and neighborhood organizations and businesses. These projects generated over 30 million positive media impressions of an area that otherwise would have had a predominantly negative public narrative. Businesses and other groups that participated say they saw increased visibility, interest and energy because of the projects and 90% say they are "more likely" to work with an artist again. The Irrigate model has already been piloted and adapted at different funding levels to support artists to address historic preservation, new development and revitalization in both urben and rural communities.



Irrigate press release, p. 35



powerful and authentic results.

- **Define artist broadly.** The simple act of naming people as artists and supporting them to design creative projects is an important means of building agency and equity.
- Work from existing assets. Work with and from what exists in a place people, cultures, organizations and businesses. Each is a resource and has strengths to bring to the issue. By boosting and connecting what exists, you increase social capital and relationships that can continue long past a project timeframe.
- Collaborate cross-sector. Work with diverse and even unlikely partners and stakeholders more perspectives, skills and networks create deeper change.
- Give people a common cause. Help people see how their small action can combine with others and together add up to something bigger in support of where they live. Make t-shirts to make the cause visible and to give people a sense of shared identity and investment.
- Provide simple mechanisms. Make it easy for people to work together, with simple and low-risk on-ramps. Have as few rules and restrictions as possible.
- The whole is more than the parts. Seeding a place with many small projects involving multiple artists provides more opportunities to engage community, attract media coverage, and develop more relationships than one single large project.
- Build lasting relationships. Collaborating together in new ways creates relationships, capacity and work habits that last beyond a project and lead to other actions.
- Pay artists! Part of the goal of this project is to demonstrate the value of artists' contributions to their community. Even if your resources are modest, make sure artists are paid for their work.

# c. Budget and funding

The Irrigate model can accommodate a variety of types and sizes of community challenges. It is important to have enough resources to create a critical mass of projects to create momentum and variety and to ensure that no single artist project bears the entire responsibility of addressing the challenge.



St Paul Mayor Chris Coleman spray paints the Irrigate T-shirt graphic (Broken Crow designed) on a wall during the launch of Irrigate in September 2011. Photo by Zoe Prinds-Flash

### Our definition of placemaking

Whether you frame your work in terms of creative placemaking or not, if you are strengthening community in a place – that's what you're doing.

There are many definitions of creative placemaking (google it!). This is what we use:

Creative placemaking is the act of people coming together to change overlooked and undervalued public and shared spaces into welcoming places where community gathers, supports one another, and thrives. Places can be animated and enhanced by elements that encourage human interaction — from temporary activities such as performances and chalked poetry to permanent installations such as landscaping and unique art. — Irrigate



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If you have a smaller amount of resources, we recommend concentrating artist projects in a smaller geography over a shorter time and even considering it a pilot or trial run – leaving room to build on momentum and success. A pilot can be an effective strategy to show "proof of concept" and demonstrate demand from the community, which can lead to additional investment from supporters. With more resources you can sustain the project longer, run multiple workshops, and be more expansive with the target geography and time line.

Consider a variety of sources when you are fundraising. Depending on your goals and target area, the project may fit into multiple funding priorities including arts, community engagement, community development, and economic development. Depending on the challenge you are addressing, there may also be support available from government or business programs. Independent business associations and chambers of commerce, main street initiatives, housing or transit authorities, redevelopment programs, marketing and tourism, and social entrepreneurship investment groups may all be possible partners or supporters. Your key partners may also have access to or be eligible for other sources.



Before the build out of the Daily Diner, Irrigate organized artists to come together and paint paper murals for the windows until opening day. Photo by Zoe Prinds-Flash

# **Sample Budgets**

These sample budgets provide some guidelines for a small and large project and include all of the costs of implementation. We start with \$1000 as the basic amount to support an artist project; depending on your location, a different amount might make sense. It is important that this support be modest, so that you can 1) pay many artists to try collaborative work, 2) create a low-risk environment for artists and collaborators to try new ways of working, and 3) create a project that a collaborator could fund on their own.

Expense range	Single site/ Shorter time frame	Larger site/ Longer time frame
Number of artist projects	10	75-100
Staffing		
Project management, design, workshop facilitation	\$10,000	\$90,000
Key partner support	\$2,000	\$20,000
Social media/marketing		\$5,000
Evaluation	\$3,000	\$10,000
Artist training		
Outreach and artist recruitment	\$1,000	\$5,000
Collaborating organization support	\$2,000	\$30,000
Artist workshops (space rental, supplies, hospitality)	\$2,000	\$10,000
Artist projects		
Project stipends (includes materials)	\$10,000	\$100,000
Overall marketing and events for artist projects	\$5,000	\$15,000
Total	\$35,000	\$285,000

# Chapter 2: Define goals and assemble team

### a. Define goals

In the beginning, you'll need to have a general sense of what your goals are so you can have targeted conversations, however, you'll want to remain flexible and expect to continue to develop and clarify goals with partners as they come on board. Goals developed together will be more relevant and ultimately, more likely to be achieved.

- I. What is the community challenge or opportunity? It will likely be a combination of place and the people who live, work and are invested in that place.
- Place What is it? A construction project, a commercial node, a road improvement, a set of lots or buildings, a lakeshore? What are the boundaries and the physical features? A historic preservation effort? Is it a contentious community issue or a negative narrative about a place?
- People Are there relationships between groups of people or interests that you'd like to build? Are there attitudes or habits that you'd like to change? Do you want to build artist leadership? Are there types of people you want to engage through the artist projects? You might be interested in intergenerational or intercultural exchange, or connecting business owners to the neighborhood they are in.

2. What are you hoping artist projects will achieve? Referring to the challenges/opportunities above — what are you hoping these artist projects will achieve? This could be very specific to more general, such as revitalizing storefronts on a main street to bringing activity and sense of identity to a neighborhood node. It might also include engaging community in new ways, and empowering residents to affect change where they live.

### Irrigate Goals

- Train local artists in creative placemaking
- Support local artists to create projects with cross-sector collaborators
- Engage local residents and businesses through creative placemaking during time of light rail construction
- Support artists to help create a positive narrative about the Central Corridor



Aristophanes' 'The Frogs' - Inspired by their Frogtown neighborhood surroundings, artists Luke Weber, Jennifer Harrington, and Cassia Rose Harder (The Gonzo Group Theatre) put on a production of a Greek comedy in a parking lot. Photo by Peter Haakon Thompson

## Picking a project name

Wait to select your project name until you have key partners. Together, pick a name that is separate from any one single partner's programs so that you all can equally claim it. You are welcome to use Irrigate <your place> if it suits your objectives.

## b. Find partners and collaborators

At this point, you may or may not have a set of partners or interested parties working on this project together. Even with key partners in place, there are many opportunities to work with additional collaborators on outreach, facilitation, and resource connecting that will make it more successful.



Partnership agreement template, p. 37



### I. Who are the stakeholders?

Think broadly, and think about all aspects of the community challenge that you identified above, from the physical site to people and groups who could be involved. These could be organizations, companies, groups, types/communities of people, and individuals.

### **Questions to ask:**

- Who's already involved or related to this?
- · Who's affected by it?
- Who should be involved?
- Who could be involved?

### 2. Who represents stakeholders?

You may have already identified some in question I, but think of more using the prompts below.

### For instance:

- City and county government (including departments and initiatives)
- Educational institutions (including extension services)
- Community development corporations (housing, economic)
- Neighborhood/geographically-focused organizations (neighborhood association, watershed or park organizations)
- · Business and commercial associations
- Cultural organizations
- Social service/support organizations (homeless services, food shelf, etc.)
- Issue-based organizations (health, environment, art, equity, etc.)
- Affinity groups (activity club, history society, etc.)

### 3. Who's interested?

Start meeting with the people and organizations you identified in question 2 to see if they are interested in

the idea. You might want to split the list into a few groups – with the roles below in mind. There are different levels of working together, so you'll want to find overall partners sooner, and then you can all look for collaborators together.

Important qualities to look for in partners and collaborators:

- Complementary or overlapping mission and programs
- · Expertise and connections in other areas besides yours



**Soul** @ **the Village** - Artists Tsimbina Andrianaivo, Bob Yang, and Kaocheeia Vang (SoulLections) serenaded the audience with neo-soul, jazz, r&b, bossanova at the Vietnamese restaurant, Mai Village. Photo by Peter Haakon Thompson



Saint Anthony Park Wayfinding Project - Artist Carrie Christensen developed an eco-friendly wayfinding system that encourages drivers to get out of their cars and walk and bike through their community. Photo by Irrigate

# Define goals and assemble team

- Capacity to participate (with or without direct compensation)
- Chemistry can you work together?

### c. Define roles

**Key partners/leadership team:** Staff with decision-making capacity from each key partner and lead program implementation staff.

- Make major strategic and program structure decisions
- · Fundraising and financial management

### Program staff:

- · Design and implement overall project
- Collaborator development and management
- · Outreach to artists
- Design and facilitate workshop and study hall
- Design and manage project application, selection and implementation
- Management of artist contracts
- · Publicity plan
- Coordinate artist project documentation
- Program evaluation\*
- Social media\*
- Media tracking\*
- Photo and video documentation\*
- Major event coordination\*

\* Not all of this work needs to be filled by your staff. Depending on resources and capacity, these are roles that could easily be filled by a freelancer.

### Other collaborators:

- Outreach: connect artists to workshop/project opportunity, connect artists to potential project collaborators.
- Workshop co-facilitation: share facilitation of workshop, provide local issue/area context, and connect to local resources.
- Project support and advising: advise on project criteria, provide feedback and/or participate in selection process, assist in troubleshooting.

# Irrigate Partners and Collaborators

### Key partners

- Springboard for the Arts
- Twin Cities Local Initiatives Support Corporation (economic development corporation)
- City of Saint Paul, Mayor's office

### Collaborators

### Artist outreach

- 6 district councils (our neighborhood organizations)
- Cultural organizations Workshop co-facilitation
- 6 district councils
- Center for Hmong Arts and Talent

### **Business outreach**

- University Avenue Business Association
- Asian Economic
   Development Association
- U7/Neighborhood
   Development Center
   (business collaborative)

# Artist project connecting and advising

- 6 district councils
- City Department of Public Works



# Chapter 3: Connect with local artists

### a. Define who is an artist

To engage as many creative people as possible in your community challenge, we advise using a broad and inclusive definition of who's an artist. You'll also need to be clear about this so that people recognize themselves in your definition and don't self-select out of the opportunity.

We use: Artists are people who consider themselves artists.

These can be people who sing in church choir and knit for family, to poets, printmakers, and musicians who make part of their living as artists, to full-time artists who win awards

# and have work in museums.

# Existing artist groups

There may be artists who are members of a group or organization defined by medium, career stage, or even location. Depending on your goals and resources, you might choose to focus on engaging their members initially. The one caution here is to engage artists in a diversity of media, or encourage them to work across disciplines - you probably don't want to limit artist projects to one type.

### Other categories to consider:

- Career stage: emerging, mid-career, established.
- Medium: performing, visual, literary, music, social practice, muralist, public artist, spoken word, dance, theater, participatory, etc.



Light Rail Shuffle - Artist Dianne E'Laine led participants in performing her original song and choreographed dance about public transit; its history, and its future. Photo by Peter Haakon Thompson

### What is art?

We borrow a broad definition of art from writer/artist Allan Kaprow:

"...art is a weaving of meaningmaking activity with any or all parts of our lives."

See Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life, Allan Kaprow

## b. Define local, or your artist-shed

### Why local?

Local is important. Focusing on local artists means you will discover people who reflect the history, culture and flavor of the place. They come with connections to the community, the geography and built environment, the businesses and organizations. By strengthening these connections between artists, residents, organizations and businesses, through interacting and working together, you create relationships that remain long after the artist projects are over.

#### What is local?

Depending on how your city is organized, and how people understand it (often two different things), "local" might be defined by:

· Official boundaries from neighborhood to regional scale



## Connect with local artists

- Historic, cultural or commercial boundaries
- Live and/or work
- History in a place (particularly growing up and having family in a place)
- Personal investment (this one can be tricky we used it to be inclusive, but we did judge shopping somewhere did not count, but growing up there did)

We use: ...artists who live, work, or have a personal investment in the six neighborhoods that share the Green Line in Saint Paul.

### c. Create the invitation

Keep the invitation simple. Your message to artists should be a call to action that sounds doable and realistic, and maybe even fun: Come take a free workshop and access support to do a collaborative project.

Registration should also be friendly, simple, and non-judgmental. We don't ask for artists to prove their qualifications – no resume, no work samples.

- Artist workshop announcement, p. 38
- Irrigate workshop announcement, p. 39
- Workshop registration (what information to collect), p. 40

### d. Cast a wide net

Work with your key partners and collaborators to reach artists. If you're using a broad definition of artist, make sure you post information beyond the typical sources artists use to find information. Partners and collaborators can also personalize outreach to speak to their constituents.

# Here are some ways to spread the word:

- Artist resource/information sources
- Local online forums and groups
- Community and artist bulletin boards
- Info sessions
- Word of mouth

# Chapter 4: Artist projects

## a. Project criteria

Define the project criteria based on your community challenge(s) and target area. Think more about what you want the projects to do, and less about what they will be – leave that to the artists to imagine and deliver.

You'll need to identify the following:

### I. Eligibility

Is this only for artists who have taken the training workshop, or who are members of an artists group, or some other qualification?

### 2. Target area

Where can projects can happen? Indoors, outdoors, public or private spaces? A block, a building, vacant storefronts?

### 3. Goals of projects

What do you hope to have happen? Keep these broad, giving the artist and potential collaborators room to be creative.

### 4. Other requirements

- Collaboration Is collaboration required? Of what type? Is it cross-sector, independent business, non-profit, etc? Will you be helping artists make these connections, or are they on their own?
- Community engagement Do you expect them to involve the public? In any particular phase of the process (inception, design, implementation, as audience, etc.)? Will you be helping with this?
- Is there an event/public activity requirement?
   Do they need to include an occasion for gathering or not? Or perhaps you are centering activity around a weekend, so some part of the work needs to happen during it.
- What else?



Flamenco Christmas on the Green Line: A Processional of Song and Dance - Artist Deborah Elias brought color, music, and festivity to a one-mile stretch of University Avenue through a traveling flash mob of singers and dancers to sing villancicos, or flamenco Christmas carols. Photo by Rudy Arnold

## What about quality?

There are a lot of ways to think about quality in this initiative. Having early, in-depth conversations about your goals, who you are trying to reach and support, and the lasting impact you hope to have on your community will help you decide how to think about what quality and success looks like for you and your project.

For Irrigate, quality was defined by community relevance. That was demonstrated through the artist finding a community collaborator – if the collaborator was willing to do the project, that meant it had community relevance.

Other factors of quality for us were:

- What is quality of collaboration?
- How will the project change people's experience and perception of the place?
- What is the quality of interactions that will be sparked?

### 5. Time frame

Are projects to happen during a certain time period? Or cluster around a specific date (projects might span different periods, and but you might want a cluster of activities on a specific date)? Or maybe everything is happening on one day?

### 6. Support

How much money will artists get? We start with \$1000 as the basic amount to support an artist project; depending on your location, a different amount might make sense. For your sanity, we recommend that this is the full amount for the project – including any materials, supplies, etc. Do emphasize to artists that they should do a project commensurate with the amount of support. And that some of the budget is to pay for their time and work.

It is critical that this support be modest, so that you can I) support many artists to implement projects, 2) create a low-risk environment for artists and collaborators to try new ways of working, and 3) create a project that a collaborator could fund on their own.

## b. Project application

Once you have defined your project criteria, create the project application form to give to artists at the workshop. Use our template to guide your application design.



Artist project application template, p. 41

### c. Selection process

Whether you are doing a first come/first served or a juried process, you'll want to decide in advance who is selecting or advising, and what they're judging.

### What about rules and regulations?

Obviously, you need to do your best to make sure that the artist projects that happen with your support don't break any laws and don't put anyone in any danger. That being said, you also want to create an atmosphere where people feel permission to take action to support their community in creative ways.

### A few tips:

Make sure you (and the artists you work with) understand the different rules for public and private property. The more the projects can take place on private property (parking lots, lawns, windows and exterior walls of privately owned buildings, etc.) and in collaboration with those private property owners, the less you will need to worry about insurance, permits and bureaucracy.

If projects are on public right of way/ public property, it's important to have a relationship with your city government and specific staff who can advise you. You might find, especially for temporary projects, city staff might say "Do it, but don't tell anyone I said that." Good city partners will help your artists navigate sign ordinances, event permits, street closures, etc.

Depending on your target area, city regulations, and goals, you may need to develop a one-page sheet to address common questions about permanent and semi-permanent art, signage, murals, historic properties.

• First come/first served - applications are reviewed as they are submitted for meeting basic criteria, feasibility and technical issues, and with an eye to suggest additional resources and connections. In this process, it is very reasonable to go back to the artist with concerns and help them resolve them so that they can successfully implement their project.



 Juried – a panel, with members who reflect stakeholder groups (neighborhood organizations, business owner, etc.) and program staff. You may decide that staff is advisory, or they may also participate in the ranking and voting.

### What's being judged?

It's important to make sure the panelists understand what criteria and qualities they should judge. Based on your goals, you'll need to decide what factors are more important, and where artistic quality falls into that spectrum.

### d. Artist project management

Once you've approved or selected the artist projects, there are multiple steps to ensure successful implementation. Create a "packet" to give to the artists that includes:

- Congratulations cover letter with expectations and payment instructions
- Contract to sign and return
- Press release tip sheet
- Final report form

### **Artist contract**

Always have a contract that explicitly states roles and responsibilities. Include:

- Title/Description/Dates of project
- Roles and responsibilities of the artist
- · Roles and responsibilities of commissioning organization
- Artist copyright of project and work produced
- Documentation agreement
- Credit acknowledgement
- · Payment and schedule



Artist contract template, p. 47

### Press release and media

### Get the word out

Getting the word out about the artist projects is critical - not only so people can attend and participate, but also so that you build awareness and a media buzz around your efforts. Even if people aren't able to attend, or rarely drive by the site to notice new activity, hearing about it in the media and by word of mouth changes people's perceptions of an area.

## "Support" vs. "Grants"

What are you going to call the project support you provide to artists? In our case, it was important to call it support instead of a grant, mini-grant, or funding. This helped us attract a broad diversity of artists, many of whom might have been intimidated or uninterested in a traditional grant program. Calling it project support also helped us create a noncompetitive culture for the program. That being said, we recognize that for some artists being awarded a "grant" carries a certain cachet and credibility. Although it seems small, it is important to be intentional about the language you use and how you name the components of your program.

# Artist projects

### Online/social media

Make it easy for people to learn and share information about the artist projects - create an online presence, particularly for events and activities, but also progress reports. Facebook events are an easy way to reach a broad audience.

### Press releases

If there are only a handful of artist projects, you may want to manage press releases yourself to ensure good coverage. If there are many projects, you may want to encourage and assist artists to issue the press releases themselves. This not only benefits the artists who learn how to do it for themselves, but then the press releases come from multiple artists instead of your organization alone – potentially attracting different notice from the media.



Wacky Wheelers - Artists Mitchell Dose and Alicia Dvorak facilitated Wacky Wheelers, an open invitation to the community to create, decorate and illuminate a bicycle or other 'rolling contraption' for a large group ride. Photo by Peter Haakon Thompson



Press Release tip sheet, p. 49

### Artist project final report

A final report captures valuable information about artist projects for telling the overall story and encourages artists to reflect on the experience. We recommend that you make it a requirement in order to receive final payment.

As you write final report questions, think about what information you want to collect for your overall program. These might include:

- What happened?
- · How many people participated, and in what ways?
- Were there unexpected results?



Artist final report template, p. 52



Little Mekong Plaza Mural - Artist Kao Lee Thao worked with local youth to paint a mural intended to help inspire a temporary plaza space. Photo by Soozin Hirschmugl



### e. Documentation

### Title cards

Whether projects are permanent, semi-permanent (short-term installation) or temporary (performance, activity), create title cards with the artist name, project title, and date to display at the site of the project. Even if the project is completed and no longer visible, the title card is still an indicator and reminder of the project. You may provide these to the artist to install, or you may install them.

### Photo/video

Do require your artists to document their projects as part of their final report, making it easier for you to share the story of their work. Even if someone has not participated in the project, they can understand and value the story better if there are images to accompany a description.

We also recommend that you do your own separate documentation of the projects, particularly of the final product or activity (in-progress is great too, but sometimes harder to schedule). See Ch. 6 for ideas about overall program documentation.





Irrigate project title cards

### f. Celebration

Take advantage of the multiple artist projects and new relationships to highlight the work you are doing to support community and economic development. After all the projects are completed, host a final celebration that acknowledges and celebrates all the participants – artists, their collaborators, and the public. This is another opportunity to build positive attention for your community, and also attract additional support for your work.

# Chapter 5: Training workshop and study hall

Providing a free training workshop for artists on creative placemaking and collaboration techniques is essential to getting good projects. While artists have a variety of skills and talents, many of them have not been invited or encouraged to use those skills in a community context. The training workshop

provides background on the value of creative placemaking, context for the community challenge, tools for the artist to engage with businesses and community groups, and also connects artists to one another. By connecting artists to one another, you also build new networks of social capital that support artists to take action together.

Depending on your budget and goals, you may want to hold multiple workshops. In our experience, 30-50% of the workshop attendees will propose a project. That's perfectly fine – artists who attend the workshop but never propose a project still gain new connections, ideas and inspiration and will contribute to community in other ways.

## Workshop summary

- Introductions
- Placemaking presentation
- Neighborhoods primer
- Observation Piece
- Lunch
- "From me to we" (leadership, teams and collaborations)
- Project criteria and application process
- Creating next steps
- Wrap-up and evaluation

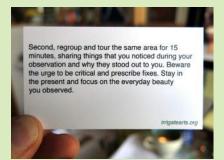
### a. Curriculum overview and components

This is an 8-hour workshop, with components that offer something new for everyone, from understanding creative placemaking to collaboration techniques. The design is highly interactive and gives everyone a chance to connect with other participants on an individual or small-group basis.

We usually open doors at 8:30 am, start at 9 am or thereabouts, and ALWAYS finish by 5 pm (though people will linger after the official finish). The minute indicators in the chart do not add up exactly to 8 hours – there's half an hour of wiggle room to start a little late, adjust to the group if they're on a roll, and end on time.







**Observation Tour** - Springboard staff Jun-Li Wang leads Placemaking Workshop participants on Observation Tour. Cards used to facilitate activity. Photo by Zoe Prinds-Flash

#### Curriculum overview

This design is for 15-25 participants led by 2-4 co-facilitators:

Min	Activity	Instructions	Goals/notes
	Arrive	Sign-in/register, nametags, settle in.	Welcome, provide refreshments, confirm contact info.
5	Short welcome, housekeeping, agenda	Short welcome. Review agenda, noting project application information is at end, and that project ideas artists may have should be set aside until end of workshop. Refer to folder, any misc housekeeping (bathroom location, etc).	1 ' ' ' '
30	Introductions	Small group intros at each table: name, artform, why here. Full group intros: name, artform, connection to challenge.	
15	Program information	Share your program overview, partners, funders, etc.	Share context, how you all got here.
30	Placemaking presentation	See creative placemaking presentation guide on p. 53 to create your own.	Introduce creative placemaking, create common language/understanding, inspire.
35	Neighborhood/ target area	Give overview of challenge and broad description of target area/site. See #9 of creative pacemaking presentation guide on p. 57.	This is to introduce the area but NOT the details of the community challenge itself.
10	BREAK	Tell people to be almost ready to go outside at the end of break.	
40	Observation Piece	See Observation tour activity, p. 59	Practice active observation.
20	Reflection	Free form reflection on morning information and activities - what stands out for you, what are you thinking about? Have everyone write a thought anonymously on a sheet of paper, crumple & throw the paper around the room, having a little fun. Regather and take turns reading aloud. Together find a few common themes or topics, assign to tables for lunch conversations. Debrief tool: How did you feel? What was this good for? (Affirming, anonymous so lower-risk, etc.) Technique can be used to ask hard questions of strangers and familiar people. Also, it is fun.	ideas, organizing tables for lunch to encourage moving around.

## Training workshop and study hall

Min	Activity	Instructions	Goals/notes
45	LUNCH	Sit at a new table, introduce yourself, and eat and chat! No need to report back.	Encourage changing seats to meet other people.
5	Frame afternoon	Introduce afternoon agenda - about artist role, strengths, working in teams, working in collaboration. And yes, finally, the details of getting project support!	Shift from artist perspective into thinking about self as a leader working in collaboration with others.
50	Leadership styles	See Leadership dimensions activity, p. 61	Understand self and strengths, other styles, and how to support other styles.
50	Team building	See Team building activity, p. 64	Understand that teams have stages and how to help them move along smoothly.
20	Collaboration tips	Ask: who does their artistic work solo? In collaboration? Do you collaborate in other types of work? In pairs, with someone you haven't talked to much today, discuss for 10 min a collaboration that went well, and for what concrete reasons? Regroup, capture "collaboration tips" on chart paper. Save, type and email to participants following workshop.	Collectively define elements of good collaboration.
10	BREAK	Cookies!	
30	Active listening	See Active listening activity, p. 66	Practice active listening and understanding other peoples' passions.
30	Project criteria & application process	Project criteria & application process. Use your own handout from Chapter 5.	Understand project criteria and process.
15	Next steps	Review worksheet questions and give 10-15 minutes to do worksheet individually. Worksheet is for artist to keep. Optional: when complete, find someone else who looks done and share what you wrote, ideas, gaps, etc. See Next steps worksheet on p. 68	Create a plan of action and capture today's ideas.
5	Postcard	Distribute blank postcards to each table. Instruct artists to write their own address and write a note to themselves that will be mailed in x months (usually I-3 months). Write to yourself - what do you want to congratulate yourself on having accomplished?	This will serve as a little reminder of what they thought they might do.
5	Wrap-up	Thank you, reminders (staff=resource, we're here for you.) Fill out an evaluation before you leave. Have a <swag a="" like="" t-shirt=""> as a thank you from us. See workshop evaluation, p. 69.</swag>	Appreciation and becoming part of a group of artists who take action in their community.



#### b. Workshop logistics

#### Scheduling and registration

- A full day is generally better than two half days (you lose people and it's hard to maintain energy in the evening).
- Schedule the workshop for a full 8 hours. Open doors half an hour earlier for coffee & registration. If you finish a bit early, everyone feels extra happy.
- 20-25 people is an ideal number. Less than 12 can be tough for some of the activities. You usually need to register 30+ people to have 20-25 show up the day of the workshop.
- Ask for RSVPs so you know how many people to prepare for.
- Send out a reminder a few days before the workshop.

#### Room

- Use a comfortable meeting room with ample space to move around.
- Arrange the meeting room café-style, with 4-8 chairs around each table. This allows for better small group discussion.
- Arrange extra tables (registration, food, etc.) in different parts of the room, avoiding creation of a "front" and "back."
- Room should have blank wall or screen for projection and walls or windows to tape chart paper.

#### Design and facilitation

- Ideally have 2-4 co-facilitators who take turns leading. It's a hard day for one facilitator to manage solo, plus you need extra people for some activities. This could be your core staff plus collaborating organizations.
- Having co-facilitators increases the perspectives and styles artists can experience, plus introduces artists to multiple organizations.
- Facilitate from different parts of the room so no-one is always at the front or back.
- Don't assume all artists know each other; mix pair, small and whole group activities so they have a chance to meet different people.

#### Hospitality

- Have directional, welcome and registration information signage.
- Post a large-print summary agenda (in addition to what you put in folder).
- Have breakfast treats, a nice lunch, and cookies for a mid-afternoon break.
- Be generous these are people who care deeply about where they live/are so give a bonus gift if you can. T-shirts with your program name are an excellent way to end the day.

#### Workshop materials

- Food, food (and drink)
- Room signage
- Nametags
- Registration/sign-in sheet
- Folder with agenda, supporting documents, evaluation form
- Map of project target area (post on wall)
- Agenda summary on chart paper (post on wall)
- Projector & screen
- Markers and pens
- Chart paper
- Masking tape
- Index cards & straws
- Postcards
- Swag t-shirts, magnets, etc.



### Training workshop and study hall

#### Folder

• Give everyone a pocket folder. They'll use it for this work, and it'll help keep all the information in one place.

We include: summary agenda, organizational info, project target area info (maps, etc.), evaluation form.

#### c. Study hall

Study hall is a follow-up session to provide support and feedback to artists who are going to apply for project support. Schedule one or more study halls, 2-4 weeks following the workshops.

#### At Study Hall:

- Staff makes sure project meets basic criteria.
- Artist presents their draft proposal to another artist for peer feedback.
- Staff and other artists may suggest additional connections, resources and ideas to strengthen project.



Peer feedback tip sheet, p. 70

#### Should it be mandatory?

For Irrigate, we required artists to attend one study hall to receive peer feedback before they submitted an application. In our case, we committed to funding all proposals in the order they were submitted, until our project funds ran out, so we wanted to have extra eyes on proposals before they were submitted to ensure basic fit AND to connect them to additional resources before they started their project. Regardless of how many projects you are supporting and whether it is first come, first served or not, it's also a way to help artists create a stronger project proposal,

From an artists' perspective, giving and getting feedback may be something they do not have a lot of practice doing, but will strengthen any proposal they write in the future.



Workshop artists work together during tower building exercise.

Photo by Peter Haakon Thompson

### Chapter 6: Evaluation and documentation

Evaluation of your program is important. Whether it is designed as a pilot program or large scale and longer term, evaluation will inform you of which elements of your program are working, what can be adjusted and improved, and whether you are achieving the results you want. Keep in mind the goals you defined in Chapter 2, and use these additional questions to guide your evaluation design.



Map the Ave - Artist Sam Carlsen painted a city map on a parking lot that participants used to determine the biking time to their favorite spot. Photo by Jon Reynolds

#### a. Success criteria

#### Why are you evaluating?

- Who is it for? Yourself, existing funders, potential funders, the community?
- What is it for? To learn and improve your programs, to prove a pilot is worth expanding, to find more collaborators, to attract support? To document what happened?

#### What are the results you seek? What will happen?

Describe these in concrete terms and numbers, such as:

- # projects
- # people attending events
- # people engaged
- # of media mentions
- new types of people engaged
- % of satisfied collaborators
- % of businesses who had new customers
- % of businesses who had increase in sales on project days
- % of artists and businesses who would collaborate together again

#### What are the long term goals?

What will change? Economic stability/vibrancy, sense of place, revitalized main street, attitudes, perceptions, community identity? Be specific. What are the indicators (measurable signals that change has occurred)? For example:

- Increased small business stability. Indicator: businesses have new customers who return.
- New social capital. Indicator: artists and collaborators chose to work together without your participation.
- Improved community identity. Indicator: positive media mentions of community.

#### b. Data collection and analysis

#### What data will you collect?

Based on what you identified as success criteria, you will need to decide what data is reasonable to collect, and what methods you will use to collect it. Prioritize what you want to measure, and also leave room for your curiosity to guide the questions. Data may be collected by a combination of individuals, including program staff, the artists, partner staff, student researchers and outside consultants, depending on your resources and the methods you use. Be realistic about your capacity and budget.

#### What methods will you use?

Balance your methods with what you're trying to achieve in your programming and your capacity. Inviting people come to a joyful event to only have them fill out a demographics survey before they can participate is not welcoming and can make people feel like a number. Staff/artist observation is a perfectly good method – leaving people to have their experience without disruption. At the same time, asking people what they think and what they like or would change can be valuable – especially if you want to develop relationships directly with them and are open to where the conversation might go.

#### Some common measurement tools:

- Observation (head count, some demographics)
- Pre and post surveys/questionnaires (selfadministered or given by surveyor)
- · Key stakeholder interviews
- Conversations
- Focus groups
- Artist final reports
- · Post-project survey of collaborator
- Media coverage (set up Google alerts to help you track these)





Keeping Warm in the City
Artists Thelma Buckner, Jesse Buckner, and Patricia Lacy-Aiken hosted a mini-concert with Black History Month Trivia Questions between the songs at Elsa's House of Sleep.

Photo by Julie Caruso

#### Who will analyze the data?

Analysis is not magic. It can help if another person can take all the information collected (surveys, focus group transcripts, media articles) and do a first organizing of the data to summarize findings and look for trends. Someone closer to the programming can then look more deeply to draw conclusions about the impact of the work.

The results also need not be wholly numeric. This work is best illustrated by descriptions, images and numbers.

#### c. Documentation

Document everything!! Images and video can tell the story more quickly than numbers and text alone. These projects will produce stories that you will want to share. Even if you require artists to document their work, you'll be best served if you also document projects and have the images/footage handy for your own use.

#### We suggest that you:

- Use artists' final reports to help capture the story for you.
- Hire photographers to document each project, especially event-based temporary ones.
- Send a photographer around every so often to capture permanent/semi-permanent projects.
- Hire a videographer to track a few projects and create short videos.

#### d. Sharing the story

We'd be remiss if we did not remind you that all of this work above is not just so you can show that you did what you set out to accomplish — it's really so that you can support your community and share their stories for everyone to hear. So use the data, images, videos, and stories to broadcast the work. And share the images with the artists so they can use them to support their future work.

Take advantage of the media – they are always looking for content. With multiple artist projects of different types, you'll find that more than only the art or community reporter will be interested in the story. Their angle

#### Image tips for photographers

Photographers have different styles. To get the documentation you want, be explicit. This is what we ask for:

20-30 images max, an assortment of the following:

- · Before and after
- Wide shots so we understand context, overall setting
- The art piece(s)/performance/activity.
- Artist(s) doing their thing, wide and close-up - these might be something they could use in their portfolio to show what they do.
- · Audience/viewer participation.



Really Big Table Project - Artists Amanda Lovelee & Colin Harris built a collapsible 25-foot table that functions as a gathering space and activates streetscapes anywhere accessible by bike. Photo by Rachel Summers

might be the artist, the project itself, the participants, the business or non-profit collaborator or the community challenge. When artists work cross-sector, it is easier to make connections outside the art world and connect the work more widely.

Depending on who you're trying to engage, also cater the story to different listeners – a retail business association may be more interested in attracting new customers and creating a unique identity for a commercial node, while a neighborhood might be more interested in new ways to celebrate and engage with one another.

### Chapter 7: Additional help

#### a. Other resources

For more ideas, resources and toolkits for artists and communities to catalyze change together, visit Creative Exchange (www.springboardexchange.org). In addition to toolkits, Creative Exchange hosts conversations where you can engage other practitioners around how to use the resources and adapting them to your community, as well as share inspirational stories of artists and their work.

We recommend looking at some other projects that use creative placemaking:

<u>Artplace</u>

**Collinwood Rising** 

Gap Filler

**CoSign** 

**Artists in Storefronts** 

Arts on Chicago

**Revolve Detroit** 

Michael Strand Sandbag Project

**Art in Odd Places** 

#### b. Attribution note

We'd be appreciative if you featured this language somewhere on any of your organization's press releases, websites, promotional materials, etc.:

This local project is modeled on the Irrigate program in St. Paul, Minnesota, created by Springboard for the Arts, Twin Cities LISC and the City of St. Paul.

A link back to our websites would also be appreciated for any online presence:

<u>Springboardexchange.org</u> <u>Springboardforthearts.org</u>



**Your Map** - Your Map was an installation at Cycles For Change, facilitated by Paul Stucker and Kalen Rainbow Keir that asked local residents to make a map of their path through the surrounding neighborhoods.

Photo by Rachel Huss



Making Place at the Bus Stop - Artist Kristen Murray's project was essentially a bus stop "residency." Kristen "staffed" the bus stops during regular periods to ask passers-by about their experience of the bus stops, public spaces and buildings there. Photo by Kristen Murray

#### c. Consulting services

While this toolkit is free and intended to spark your idea, Springboard for the Arts is available for consulting services, depending on your interests and needs. Prices are determined based on the scope of work. Please contact us for additional information. Services we provide include:



- Developing permanent, local artist resources & services in your community
- Creating non-traditional community partnerships
- Workshops, trainings and presentations
- · Project management and advising

Springboard for the Arts 308 Prince Street, Suite 270 Saint Paul, MN 55101 651-292-4381 community@springboardforthearts.org

#### d. Press links

#### **Publicity Resources**

Several local and national media outlets have featured Irrigate. Here are some of our favorites. You may reference these resources to build support for your project.

Knight Arts — Community Offering
St Paul Pioneer Press — All Aboard the Art Train
TC Daily Planet — Wayfinding Art Bikes
Knight Arts — Cornucopia of Photos
St Paul Pioneer Press — All Kinds of Art
TC Daily Planet — Irrigate Launch
Star Tribune — Urban Troubleshooters
Dance Informa — Creative Placemaking
Knight Arts — Connect Artists

#### Irrigate links

Irrigate YouTube channel
Irrigate Flickr page
Tunheim Irrigate Media Audit



Black Dog LRT Corridor Cultural Ambassador - Artists Chris Lutter-Gardella and Rene Meyer-Grimberg created a large scale two person puppet for The Black Dog Café as an ambassador of hope and renewal, drawing attention to areas affected by construction to encourage patronage of local businesses. Photo by Peter Haakon Thompson



### Ch. 1: Irrigate press release







#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE September 15, 2011

Contact: Laura Zabel laura@springboardforthearts.org 651-292-3213 (o)

New project linking Saint Paul arts-based community development to Green Line Light Rail Transit receives \$750,000 grant

A new national consortium of arts funders called ArtPlace selects project for potential to be replicated across the U.S.

Soon, hundreds of projects led by local artists will bring new life and vibrancy to the Green Line Light Rail Transit route in Saint Paul, thanks to a new partnership announced today between the City of Saint Paul, Twin Cities Local Initiatives Support Corporation and Springboard for the Arts.

The partnership's project, called Irrigate, has received \$750,000 in support from ArtPlace, a new private-public collaboration. Each project supported by ArtPlace has been selected for developing a new model of helping towns and cities thrive by strategically integrating artists and arts organizations into key local efforts in transportation, housing, community development, job creation and more.

Over the next three years, Irrigate will mobilize and train artists in community development and creative placemaking, and activate hundreds of artist-led projects along the corridor to benefit businesses and neighborhoods. These projects will change the landscape of the route with art, creativity and a population of artists who are engaged in their community.

"In Saint Paul, we've known for a long time that our artists aren't just the soul of our city, but the arts industry is a huge economic engine. It only makes sense that we turn to these same strategies to achieve our goals for the Central Corridor," said Mayor Chris Coleman, whose office is a key driver in the effort.

The effort plans to bring together a period of significant infrastructure development, a high concentration of artists on both ends of the Corridor, a wide ethnic and cultural mix across the Corridor and a city with a strong track record of artist community engagement.

The approach ArtPlace is taking, known as "creative placemaking," has emerged as a promising way to increase the vitality of communities and help them grow. In 2011, the National Endowment for the Arts built on its two decades of work in creative placemaking by announcing the first grants in its new Our Town program, designed to support public-private partnerships to strengthen the arts while energizing the overall community. ArtPlace takes this movement a step further, as the first major public-private partnership to encourage creative placemaking across America.

"ArtPlace is accelerating creative placemaking, where cities and towns are using the arts and other creative assets to shape their social, physical and economic futures," said Rocco Landesman, Chairman, National Endowment for the Arts. "This approach brings new partners to the table to support the arts and recognizes the arts as vital drivers of community revitalization and development."

For more information about Irrigate, visit www.springboardforthearts.org/community-development



### Ch. 2: Partnership agreement template

Particularly if you are able to fund partners or collaborators, create an agreement with them. This template is for guidance only and may not cover your local laws.

### <Lead Organization> Partnership Agreement

Specific activities between <date> to <date> by the Partner shall be to:

- Support and co-lead placemaking workshops and study hall sessions (minimum of <#> workshops, <#> study halls).
- · Participate in training team meetings.
- Provide outreach and publicity to artists and neighborhood.
- · Collect input from community and enter online.
- Be resource, advisor and supporter to artist project collaborations.
- · Participate in artist proposal review and approval process.
- Provide workshop curriculum and program feedback.

<Lead organization> will provide:

- Overall coordination and scheduling for workshops, study halls, and other sessions.
- · Workshop and study hall content, curriculum, materials, and facilitation training.
- Program outreach, publicity and feedback materials.
- · Financial support for artist projects.

<Lead organization> agrees to pay Partner a fee of \$<amount> for the work specified above. <Lead organization> agrees that it will pay Partner \$<a href="https://doi.org/10.25/10.25/">https://doi.org/10.25/</a> at the time of execution of this agreement. Upon completion of Partner's work described herein, by <date>, <Lead organization> agrees to pay Partner the remaining fee.

Either party may terminate this agreement with 2 weeks' written notice. If the agreement is terminated, <Lead organization> will prorate the Partner fee for the amount of work already provided.

The Partner is not an employee of <Lead organization> and will not represent themselves as such.

The Partner agrees to indemnify, save, and hold <lead organization> their employees and representatives harmless from any and all claims or causes of action, including attorneys' fees, arising from the performance of this Agreement.

This Agreement contains the entire agreement between the parties. No modification of this Agreement shall be valid unless in writing and signed by both parties. Any waiver or modification of one part shall not effect the other portions of this agreement.

The laws of the State of <yours> shall govern this contract; any litigation shall be brought in the courts of that state.

Signed:		
<organization name="">:</organization>		
<name>, Executive Director</name>	Date	
<collaborating organization="">:</collaborating>		
<name, title=""></name,>	Date	



# **Ch. 3:** Artist workshop announcement template Use this to announce your workshop(s).

<program name=""> <descriptors, ie="" placemaking=""> Workshops for Artists</descriptors,></program>
<pre><first "are="" a="" about?"="" artists="" as="" audience="" call="" consider="" ever="" for="" have="" hook="" in,="" intended="" is="" paragraph:="" participation.="" questions="" such="" the="" to="" using="" who="" wondered="" workshop?="" you="" you?=""></first></pre>
Second paragraph: Details. Who is this workshop for, and what are the goals?>
<ul><li>Eligibility</li><li><your artist="" definition="" of=""></your></li><li><geographic criteria=""></geographic></li><li><other criteria=""></other></li></ul>
<ul> <li>Benefits</li> <li>Free training on <descriptors>.</descriptors></li> <li>New connections to other artists and <other resources=""></other></li> <li>Eligibility to apply for <program name="" or="" project=""> project support of up to \$</program></li> <li><other benefits=""></other></li> </ul>
Workshop(s) Artists only need to take one workshop. <day, date=""> from &lt; to &gt; at <location> <other details="" location=""></other></location></day,>
Register/RSVP



# irrigate

### Creative Placemaking Workshops for Artists in Minneapolis along the Green Line

Do you dance in the dark, exhibit in galleries, sell at shows, get called for commissions, or create visions in your living room? Maybe you're known in the collectors' world, or by your neighbors, or only by a select few in your family...but you are an artist!

Artists of any level, experience or discipline – who live or work in the new Green Line LRT neighborhoods in Minneapolis – are invited to a free training on placemaking and cross-sector collaboration. Use your creative talents to have an impact on your neighborhood, your local businesses, and the light rail corridor. After completing the training, artists will be eligible to apply for collaborative placemaking project support through a simple and speedy application process.

#### Eligibility

- You consider yourself an artist.
- You live or work in at least one of the new Green Line neighborhoods in Minneapolis (Cedar-Riverside, University, Prospect Park).
- You want to learn about placemaking and working cross-sector.

#### **Benefits**

- Free training on placemaking and collaboration tools.
- New connections to neighborhood resources and other artists.
- Eligibility to apply for collaborative placemaking project support (up to \$1000 per eligible artist/per project up to a maximum of \$3,000)

Both workshops are on Saturdays, 9:30am-5pm. March 8th and 22nd Artists need only take one workshop.

Please register online at: www.tinyurl.com/PMwkshp After you register, you will receive location information.



**Ch. 3: Workshop registration**Use these to register artists for the workshop(s). Online forms are useful when collecting this much information - consider www.eventbrite.com, www.surveymonkey.com or other online tools.

<program name=""> <descriptors> Workshops for Artists</descriptors></program>
Registration
Name, first and last:
Email address:
Best daytime phone:
What kind of art do you do?:
<ul> <li>Optional – other information you want to collect&gt;</li> </ul>
Eligibility
To be eligible for <pre><pre></pre></pre>
Residential Address (mandatory):
Work Address (if relevant to eligibility):
<ul> <li>Workshop date selection (if there are multiple options)</li> <li>Workshops – you only need to attend one.</li> <li><a href="day.time"><a href="day.time"><a< td=""></a<></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></a></li></ul>



**Ch. 4: Artist project application template**Create this to distribute during the workshop, and later, email it to participants. Be thorough, even though you will be reviewing everything during the workshop.

<pre><program logo="" name="" project="">   <project subtitle=""></project></program></pre>	
General Information	
<optional: date,="" day,="" deadline:="" submission="" time=""></optional:>	
What do you need to do?  1. Take this workshop (congratulations, you're almost done with this step!)  2. Find a collaborator  3. Develop idea with collaborator  4. <if hall="" is="" mandatory="" study=""> Prepare draft proposal  5. &lt; If study hall is manditory&gt; Attend study hall for peer feedback (each artist must do this)  6. Submit application to  7. Wait for notification by</if>	
If your proposal is approved  1. Sign contract and receive <percentage of="" support=""> 2. Initiate and complete project <by or="" time="" what="" within=""> 3. Help <pre></pre></by></percentage>	
Criteria checklist for you to use:	
<ul> <li>□ Artist applicants <up ??="" to=""> have attended a <program> workshop.</program></up></li> <li>□ <project collaboration="" requirements=""></project></li> <li>□ <target geography="" restrictions="" site=""></target></li> <li>□ <peer feedback="" hall="" requirements="" study=""></peer></li> <li>□ <project etc.="" parameters="" participatory,="" permanent,="" temporary,="" –=""></project></li> <li>□ <timeframe parameters=""></timeframe></li> <li>□ <event (are="" 4="" an="" application="" be="" can="" etc.)="" event="" event,="" if="" is="" it="" it,="" minimally="" parameters="" publicize="" requiring="" should="" so="" submission="" there="" to="" wee="" you=""></event></li> <li>□ Maximum support request of \$ per project <and any="" variables=""></and></li> <li>□ <other criteria=""></other></li> </ul>	ks prior



### <Project Name> Application I. Cover Page **Checklist:** 1. Cover page 2. Images (jpg) and image list 3. Project proposal 4. Budget Submit all materials to <contact name> at <email> I. Project name (something catchy!) 2. Project Summary (how would you describe it to someone, keep it short) 3. Peer Feedback confirmation Artist name: Date of feedback: 4. Artist Info <Optional, if project allows multiple artists:Your project may involve multiple artists.Answer the following</p> for all artists involved, starting with the primary contact for this application.> a. Name: b. Address: c. Phone: d. Email: e. Website: f. Did you take a <Program name> Workshop? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_ [if applicable] g. Describe yourself as an artist. This is not about credentials - what is it that you do as an artist? (3 sentences max.) 5. < Optional, if you are requiring: > Collaborator Info Your project may involve more than one collaborator (aside from other artists). Answer the following for all collaborators, starting with the primary collaborator. <Any criteria for collaborator, ie crosssector, geographic, etc.> a. Name of entity (business, group, organization):



c. Address: d. Phone: e. Email: f. Website:

6. < Optional if relevant: Address/location of proposed project>

g. Describe the collaborator: the business, activity or mission. (3 sentences max.)

b. Name of primary contact/collaborator(s):



2. Images and Image list
We would like up to 5 images of "before" photos of the site(s) where the project will happen. Cell phone photos are acceptable. If taking photos is an issue for you, please contact <project contact=""> at <email, phone="">.</email,></project>
Submit images as jpgs, in this format: 01_ArtistFirstName_LastName.jpg
Below, provide description of each image:
01
02
03
04
05



3.	Project Proposal
<	> pages maximum.

#### I. The Story

How did this collaboration arise, how does it meet <other criteria of your program>?

#### 2. The Project

What are you going to do? If it is related to your existing work, how is it new or different?

#### 3. The Plan and Timeline

Describe the activities and timeline required to complete your project within 3 months.

Activity/task	Date	Additional Info (who's in charge?, etc.)
Peer Feedback		
Application deadline (after peer feedback)		
Project start date		
<activity></activity>		
<activity></activity>		
<activity> add more rows if needed!</activity>		
If event date(s) for event(s)		
Project completion		

#### 4. Outreach

How will you let people know about your activity or event? Some options: social media (<Program's>, your own, etc.), neighborhood organizations, flyering and press releases.

Activity/task	Date	Additional Info (who, where?)
Press release?		
Social media?		
Inform other orgs?		
Flyering?		
Posters?		
Other?		



#### 5. Documentation

Please note: The final report and photos you submit maybe shared to inspire and activate other artists and communities. You will always be credited for the work.

Activity/task	Date	Additional Info (who's in charge, etc?)
Photos?		
Video?		
Written?		
Other?		

#### 6. Additional Info

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your proposal?

#### 7. Optional Supporting Images/Work Samples

If you wish to submit draft designs, mock-ups, or other relevant materials that reflect the final product of what you are planning for your Corridor Collaboration, you may do so. This is not required and will not have any bearing on your proposal being accepted. Note: these samples are not a part of your <\_\_> page limit.



Expense Item	Cost
Time (artist/collaborator compensation)	
Materials (describe)	
Other	
Total	
Income Source	Amount
<pre><program name=""> support (<amount artist="" available="" each="" for="" project="">)</amount></program></pre>	
Other (we encourage projects that are doable with <program name=""> support alone. If you have other secured funds or in-kind support, list them here.)</program>	



### Ch. 4: Artist contract template

Create a contract with the artist to implement their project. This template is for guidance only, and may not cover your local laws.

#### <Program name> Participation Agreement

<Contracting organization> and <Artist's Name> ("Artist") make this Participation Agreement for purposes of implementing a project in <target area>.

#### I. Roles and Responsibilities of Artist

- a. Artist is responsible for implementing project as detailed in attached proposal, <in conjunction with project team and collaborators>.
- b. Artist completes project within <number> months of signing this Agreement.
- c. Artist provides project updates especially regarding events and activities to which public is invited in order to promote them.
- d. Artist is responsible for arranging any desired insurance coverage. Artist assumes all risk of loss and damage to the Project from any cause, and agrees to hold <Contracting organization> harmless for loss or damage from any cause.
- e. Artist is responsible for upkeep and maintenance of any physical portions of the project for the duration of the project.
- f. <Contracting organization> will make no alterations, repairs or maintenance to the project.
- g. Any significant changes or alterations to project and/or timeline must be approved by <lead staff>.

#### 2. Roles and Responsibilities of <Contracting organization staff>

- a. Assistance, when requested, in supporting implementation of project on a best-effort basis.
- b. Promotion of project through online resources, social media, and other networks.
- c. Provision of <Program name> promotional materials for distribution by Artist in conjunction with project, if appropriate.

#### 3. Copyright

Artist retains copyright over any art produced as part of the project.

#### 4. Documentation

Artist agrees to permit <Contracting organization> and its designated personnel to photograph, video and document the project, and use resulting materials without restrictions or royalties paid to the Artist or <Contracting organization> for archival, promotional, marketing, website, educational and such other purposes as <Contracting organization> shall determine. Such photographic and documentary materials shall be the property of <Contracting organization>.

#### 5. Credit Acknowledgement

Any written docum	nentation of project p	referably acknowle	edges role of $<$ I	Project name>	as:"[Title of
Project] by [arti	st/s and collaborators	is a supported by	y <contracting< td=""><td>organization or</td><td><sup>^</sup> partners&gt;"</td></contracting<>	organization or	<sup>^</sup> partners>"

Please initia	l here to	indicate yo	ur willingness	to be con	tacted by	interested	media (	outlets (	(TV,
newspaper etc).		-			•				



### Ch. 4: Artist contract template (continued)

6. Fees <contracting organization=""> agrees to pay Artist a fee above.</contracting>	e of \$ <total support=""> for the work specified</total>		
<contracting organization=""> agrees that it will pay Artiupon execution of this agreement.</contracting>	ist one half of the total fee, \$ <half amount="" of=""></half>		
Upon completion of Artist's Project and submission of to pay Artist the remaining fee of \$ <half of="" request="">.</half>	final report, <contracting organization=""> agrees</contracting>		
7. Employment The Artist is not an employee of < Contracting organization.	tion> and will not represent themselves as such.		
8. Hold Harmless The Artist agrees to indemnify, save, and hold, their emploall claims or causes of action, including attorneys' fees, a			
9. Entire Agreement This Agreement contains the entire agreement between the parties. No modification of this Agreement shall be valid unless in writing and signed by both parties. Any waiver or modification of one part shall not effect the other portions of this agreement.			
10. Governing Law The laws of the State of <yours> shall govern this control of that state.</yours>	ract; any litigation shall be brought in the courts		
Signed:			
<a href="#"><artist name=""></artist></a>	 Date		
<contracting organization="">:</contracting>			
<executive director=""></executive>	Date		



### Ch.4: Press release tip sheet

Here's what we give to artists when their project is approved to support them to do their own outreach and marketing.

#### **CREATING A PRESS RELEASE**

If your project involves an event of some sort, a press release is the best way to start spreading the word about it. A press release can be helpful even if your project does not involve an eventit provides a good elevator speech for being able to quickly describe your project to interested people and lets them know how to see it.

Send it to us at <coordinator email> when you have written it so we can also help circulate it.

### HANDY TIPS (and a TEMPLATE BELOW) – to make the best and most effective press release

- Keep it **simple**. Press releases don't have to be fancy, they just have to get the information across.
- Double check that you have the "what, who, when, where, how much" clearly listed. It is the critical information to get on arts and events calendars.
- Spell check and proofread! If you can catch as many errors as possible, the less likely those errors are to be repeated by others elsewhere. If you can have someone else read over your press release, do it.
- Make sure the full press release is in the **body of the e-mail**. If someone has to take the extra time to open another attached document, there is less chance that they will do it. Also, if the press release is in the body of an e-mail, it's easier for someone to cut and paste it.
- When e-mailing press releases, don't attach large files they clog up inboxes and some people have filters that automatically reject e-mails with attachments.
- If you have **photographs** to share, make sure they are at the correct resolutions. If something is going on the web, it only needs to be 72dpi. This makes a smaller file that is more easily uploaded. If something is going to be in print, it should be 300dpi, for better print resolution and quality. Photos should be JPEG format. Include a line in your press release about **photos** being available on request, and reporters will ask for them specifically. If you think it will be helpful to attach a small picture to quickly show rather then tell, go for it, just make it small (72dpi)
- If you can, or if there is a **reporter** you think would be especially suited to covering your project, don't be afraid to follow up on your press release. You can do this with a phone call or in an e-mail, but just be respectful of the journalist's time. They have many releases and requests sent to them and they just may not be able to cover your event this time around. You want to build a **relationship** with these people so that they will cover you in the future, and more than one follow up won't endear you to them.



### Ch.4: Press release tip sheet (continued)

#### PRESS RELEASE TEMPLATE

**Your contact information** – name, phone number, e-mail address.

#### Date of press release

Title –Make it catchy! Make it short! This is how people will refer to your project, so think about that when creating a title.

List – what, who, when, where, how much.

Intro paragraph – [Title of Project] by [artist/s and collaborators] is supported by <Program name, description of partners>. What is it, who is presenting it, a brief description of the project. Finish with the dates, times, locations and that events are free.

**Second paragraph** – Expand on the concept, describe the history or inspiration for the piece, why it is important, include a quote from a key person involved in the project.

**Third paragraph (optional)** – Final key items, inspirations, quotes.

**Final paragraph** — <insert Program information and supporters that you want artists to include in their press releases>

#### DISTRIBUTION

Share this with your local news outlets – print, radio, tv, online. Also share it with your collaborators, local organizations and neighborhood groups so they can forward it to their networks.

Here's a list to get you started:

<List media outlets and organizations with contact information>



### Ch.4: Sample press release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Contact: Nick Clausen, Artist 651-247-7038 nickclausen@gmail.com

#### LIGHT THE VICTORIA

September 29th & 30th at dusk the Victoria Theater located at 825 University Ave.W. in St. Paul, MN lights up with a video projection and live-action theater dancing.

Saint Paul, MN - September 12, 2012 - As part of the Irrigate Initiative along the Central Corridor, the Victoria Theater at 825 University Avenue West in St. Paul will "light up" one more time to bring attention to the vacant theater. The night will start at dusk (approximately 7:00pm) with a video projection of the Iny Asian Dance Theater performing traditional Hmong, Chinese, and Vietnamese dances. The projection will utilize the theater's front windows, which make a perfect screen for viewing. On either side of the projection, boys and girls from Iny's Asian Dance Theater will perform traditional dances.

Nick Clausen, the artist, contacted the owners of the theater, Bee and Lamena Vue, about working together to create an art project. "They wanted to do something that reflected the diverse culture along University Avenue," Clausen says. "So I contacted Ange Hwang at the Iny Asian Dance Theater and they agreed to be part of the project."

This is a free performance and viewers are encouraged to view the projection from the sidewalk, or across the street, depending on the progression of the light-rail construction along University Avenue.

The Victoria Theater opened in 1915 as a family theater. It later turned into the Victoria Cafe where gangsters gathered during Prohibition. In 1937, the theater was renovated and turned into the Edison Lighting shop. It has sat vacant since the late 1990's. In 2009 community groups successfully organized to get a historic designation for the theater. There is hope that the theater can be rehabilitated to show performances.

Irrigate is an artist-led creative placemaking initiative spanning the six miles of the Central Corridor Light Rail line in Saint Paul during the years of its construction. Artists collaborate with businesses, organizations and community groups to change the landscape of the corridor with color, art, surprise, creativity and fun. Irrigate is a partnership between the City of Saint Paul, Twin Cities Local Initiatives Support Corporation and Springboard for the Arts.

Nick Clausen is a documentary filmmaker and is currently producing a documentary on light-rail construction along the Central Corridor.

###



### Ch.4: Artist final report template

<project log<="" name="" th=""><th>go&gt;</th></project>	go>
<b>Project Final Repo</b>	rt

#### **Checklist:**

	Final report
	3-10 images (jpg)
ĺ	Submit all materials to <email coordinator="" of="" program=""></email>

After submission of final report and images, your final payment will be processed and mailed to you. This may take up to <timeframe>.

**Images**: Submit 3-10 images with your final report, in the highest resolution that you have, on CD or emailed.

- I.Artists name(s)
- 2. Project title
- 3. Recap the story and the project for us, what did you do?
- 4. Did you discover that your existing skills contributed to this process and to collaborating? How so?
- 5. What new skills or capacity did you develop through this process that will help you with similar collaborations in the future?
- 6. Has this process contributed to your artistic or professional development? In what ways?
- 7. If you did work with other artists on this project, would you work with them again and why?
- 8. Were there unexpected results? In the artwork, in the relationship(s), etc? Describe.
- 9. Are you more or less inclined to undertake another cross-sector collaboration (unrelated to this program) after this experience?
- 10. Please estimate the number of people involved in your project those working on it directly with you (planning, implementation, coordination) and those who participated/attended (if you had an event).

Directly involved:	
Participants/Attendees:	



### Ch. 5: Creative placemaking presentation guide

#### Create your own presentation

Whether you frame your program and goals as creative placemaking, that's what you're doing. Any community challenge ultimately is about how you strengthen a community and thrive in a place. You'll want to kick this workshop off with a presentation that shares what placemaking is, why it matters, and get everyone inspired.

Make your own presentation, with LOTS OF IMAGES.

#### Suggested outline

Note: Before you start your presentation, to help you gauge participant knowledge, ask:

Who heard of creative placemaking before this? What does it mean to you/what is it? (Gauge crowd, tie presentation back into their definitions.)

#### I: Define art and artists

Referring back to Chapter 3, let participants know you have a broad definition of art and artists – to welcome them, and, if you're holding more than workshop, then they know whom else to recruit.

#### 2: Some other definitions

Find a few definitions of placemaking that speak to you. There is no ONE definition, and different fields have different angles on it.

These are the examples that we use:

#### Tips on picking images

- Use some examples from your general area, but not necessarily from your target area. You don't want to limit imagination by appearing to prefer a particular type or format.
- Use a wide range of examples, particularly in scope/expense (chalked sidewalk versus painted street mural) and temporality (performance versus climbing structure).
- Use multiple images to demonstrate one concept (3-4 images on one slide).

#### Irrigate definition of artist

In workshops we say: We define "artist" as someone who considers themselves an artist, no matter your level, experience, discipline, study. Sometimes we have to convince artists because they're modest and say things like "oh, I just write poetry, but I'm not an artist." The term is in the eye of the beholder – it could be that they sing in church choir, have work in museums and galleries, knit for friends, illustrate graphic novels, paint, sculpt, perform spoken word, write plays, photography, dance – it all counts.

"Placemaking is the way in which all human beings transform the places they find themselves into the places where they live."

- landscape architect Lynda H. Schneekloth and architect Robert G. Shibley

"Placemaking' is both an overarching idea and a hands-on tool for improving a neighborhood, city or region. It has the potential to be one of the most transformative ideas of this century."

- Metropolitan Planning Council of Chicago



"Placemaking capitalizes on a local community's assets, inspiration, and potential, ultimately creating good public spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and well being."

- Project for Public Spaces

#### 3: YOUR definition

What's your definition of creative placemaking?

This is what we use:

Creative placemaking is the act of people coming together to change overlooked and undervalued public and shared spaces into welcoming places where community gathers, supports one another, and thrives. Places can be animated and enhanced by elements that encourage human interaction — from temporary activities such as performances and chalked poetry to permanent installations such as landscaping and unique art. - Irrigate

Why we like our definition:

- It's about people! People make a place. Even the "best" designed and built place is nothing without people animating it and creating memories.
- We call out public and shared spaces many spaces are technically privately owned, however, many private spaces are open to the public, and contribute to our visual environment, even if we're unable to physically access that space. All of these spaces, and what happens in them, contribute to our experience of a place.
- Community gathers, supports one another and thrives right? That's what it's about people! This doesn't mean every place has to have community in it 24-7 it means a good place demonstrates that it is welcoming, by physical and visual cues, by memories of events past, and anticipation of events future.
- We use examples of temporary and permanent, inexpensive and expansive so people can relate this to their own block as well as a cool destination.

### 4: Another example of placemaking, an analogy: a house is a house until people make it a home

Images: houses with unique exteriors and landscaping that stand out and say "here I am!"

This analogy helps people understand what placemaking is. A house is a built structure, much like every other house on the block – and it's the inhabitants that make it unique, from their personalities to their gardening to what they hang on the walls. Most of us remember, hopefully with fondness, the house we grew up in, and the blocks we roamed as children.





#### 5: Why are we talking about creative placemaking?

**Images:** Examples of people using public streets, lots, side yards for community gatherings (pick-up football in the street, block parties, puppet theater in a side yard, plant swap in a parking lot, etc.)

#### It's not new

There's nothing NEW about placemaking though the term is relatively new. As long as there have been people, they have gathered, shared stories, built unique houses and buildings, marked paths from one place to another - made their unique cultural marks and shared together.

#### But it's relevant because...

The world has changed:

The condition	What this causes
People move around more, from city to city.	Loss of deep connections and sense of belonging.
There are fewer civic groups like booster clubs, bowling leagues, fraternal orders.	Smaller support network – in good and bad times, you can count on these relationships.
Neighborhood schools and houses of worship are less common.	Less interaction with people next door because you have different school and religious sites and schedules.
We tend to find and associate with people just like ourselves.	Exposure to fewer perspectives and experiences that add to the richness of life and ability to be open-minded and welcoming of other people.
We have retreated from streets into our yards and homes. No longer part of our living space. Who plays in the street anymore?	Fewer public spaces and opportunity for interaction.
More and more uniform and generic spaces and businesses – strip malls, big box retailers.	Limited sense of identity and pride (you could be anywhere).
People know their neighbors less.	Reduced sense of safety – you don't know your neighbors so you won't ask them for help.
What else do you see? (This is not an exhaustive list!)	?

People want to be where they feel welcomed and supported, feel like they can have a role, have sense of pride and community identity, have interesting and enjoyable things to do, where they can run into friends. Without this, not only do people have less incentive to stay and invest where they are, they literally have fewer relationships upon which to draw during times of stress.

For the health of a town or region, placemaking is critical to creating this sense of welcome, identity, amenities – which leads to attracting and retaining jobs. Companies look at where employees want to live when they consider where to grow.



#### 6: A case study or story about creative placemaking

**Image ideas:** grassroots (community-led) art or revitalization project, such as a community garden, street mural or alleyclean up.

Share some stories to illustrate placemaking. We use Paint the Pavement (also called City Repair), a street mural project where neighbors organize to paint a mural on residential



streets. Neighbors gather, organize, collect signatures, create a design, raise money to buy paint, and paint a mural on the street. This calms traffic, creates a gathering space, starts conversations, and creates a sense of pride and stewardship. More than the physical change, the process builds social networks - neighbors learn to work together despite differences, learn they can create something (which most people don't do much of these days), and really get to know one another.

#### 7. Examples of placemaking – use 5-15 slides (we use 3-4 images on each slide)

#### Some categories to consider

Participatory, interactive – games, leaf pile for jumping, snowball fight Performative – theater in parking lots, flash mobs, street musicians Wayfinding – signs identifying where you are and can go Tours and parades – self-guided walks, tours of everyday areas Reference to history, culture, geography, habitat, etc.

Night-time – performances, movies, projections

Storefront windows as gallery display

Scale/size - oversize and miniature

Easy/inexpensive – chalk, everyday and reused materials

Guerilla – yarn-bombing, chain-link fence

Novel street furniture

Tranquil, contemplative – labyrinths

Seasons (particularly if you have a chilly winter!)



Gardens/landscapes

Indoors









#### 8. Conclusion - create your own

Create your own conclusion that could cover:

- · Why creative placemaking matters in the context of your project and goals
- · Why artists are essential to placemaking in their own stomping ground
- Encouragement to think broadly about their artistic practice

Note: This is also a good time to remind artists to suspend any project ideas they have or may have brought in — until the end of the day when you get to talking about the project focus, criteria and application process. If they're too focused all day on thinking about what they should propose, they will miss out on connecting new ideas, connecting to the other artists in the room, connecting to collaborators later on, and ultimately, have less collaborative and creative projects.

This is what we say, approximately:

Your relationship to a place and the people who share it with you changes when you have an affection and sense of ownership and responsibility to it.

We hope you will use your creativity and your art to work with others to create a greater sense of place, of affection — which leads to a more vibrant, vital, successful place.

In the same way that we may be asking some of you to work outside of your regular artistic process, we also encourage you to be open to creating work that may fall outside of your "regular" art form. This is a place to experiment and to try new things if you're comfortable with it. How do you take your imagery from one medium to another? How do you use your passion for food with your artistic medium? We'll talk more about this when we get to the artist project criteria section later today.

#### 9. If you are going to talk about the history of your target area, this is a good time to do it.

Images: relevant maps, plans, etc.

If you have collaborators who are more knowledgeable about this, you may want to invite them to present.

Note: Be careful NOT to dive deep into the problems and challenges of the target area. If you do, everyone will jump into problem-solving mode and focus in on "fixing" things right away. Hold this off until the end of the day.

It helps to think about how your target area stands out and differs from adjacent areas – now, in the past, and going forward.



# You could include: • Physical features Demographics Change over time, lived history • Active stakeholders (organizations, businesses, community groups) • Notable business/commercial presence, largest employers and institutions • Overall issues important to residents (particularly those that are not about community challenge) • Interests and trends, such as momentum around green space, youth activities, etc.



### Ch. 5: Observation tour activity

#### Observation tour instructions

This activity helps artists (and anyone!) look with new eyes at a seemingly familiar or mundane place, which reminds us to slow down before we leap and gives us an appreciation for what's around us. We advise artists to use this tool when they're starting a project. In terms of the workshop experience, it's also a way for the artists to meet in small groups of 5-8.

#### Advance preparation

#### I. Materials

Create Observation Tour instructions on half sheets with this text:

#### **Observation Piece**

First, grab some people. Everyone take 10 minutes to wander alone, without talking, around a small, predefined area. Observe and notice your surroundings: surfaces, spaces, lines, patterns, detritus. Follow your curiosity. Search for everyday beauty and the overlooked, go forth with a sense of affection for the place.

Second, regroup and tour the same area for 15 minutes, sharing things that you noticed during your observation and why they stood out to you. Beware the urge to be critical and prescribe fixes. Stay in the present and focus on the everyday beauty you observed.

#### 2. Tour route advance selection

- You're looking for a short space to traverse, about a block's length, with obvious end points ("from here to the end of the block"). You want people to focus on observing, not worrying about where the end is.
- · Ideally this span starts close to the doors of your workshop building or room.
- The more boring and even grimy, the better. Back alleys, forgotten side streets, back parking lots, even boring convention center hallways. This activity is less successful in well-manicured, pretty places.
- If it's a street with sidewalks, stay on one side (and another group can go to the opposite sidewalk).
- · Tell co-facilitators what route they'll use before the activity.

#### Facilitation instructions (40 min)

#### I. Have everyone count off so they have a group number.

Counting off mixes up the group and helps everyone meet new people. The ideal group size is 5-8 artists with one facilitator. Before they move into their groups, hand out the written instructions and explain them:

#### Intro to activity

- This tour is inspired by Allan Kaprow, the artist who invented happenings.
- Think about a tour as an artistic practice.
- Exploration of everyday beauty out in the world.
- · Artists are good at noticing and bringing to light overlooked things.



### Ch. 5: Observation tour activity (continued)

- Go forth with sense of affection and openness to everything. Imagine you're an alien who beams down to planet earth, and you're an alien who is only positive everything is fascinating, beautiful and valuable.
- Read title card aloud.
- Think about what you could put a title card on found/accidental art, etc.
- When you go out with your group leader, they will tell you where to start and stop.

#### 2. Send groups off with their facilitators, who will explain the route.

Timing: 10 minutes to tour area alone, 15 to share observations.

- Group facilitator brings everyone to start of tour route. Give instructions about end location, and tell artists you will meet them there in 10 minutes.
- Review instructions and send them off with "go forth as positive aliens!"
- · Linger at front part of route to make sure no-one talks.
- Make sure you get to end point a few minutes before everyone else so they know where to stop.
   Don't start talking until full 10 minutes and everyone has rejoined group. (Smiling is ok!)
- Have everyone share their name.
- Start by saying: we will all walk together slowly over the ground we have just toured, if there is something that you noticed and want to share, just shout out and everyone can stop. It is okay to mention things that you did not notice on the initial tour.
- If necessary, remind people to stay away from criticism, analysis and solutions, and keep steering them to observations.
- Walk SLOWLY back, leaving plenty of time for everyone to make observations.
- Return to workshop room and wait for other groups to come back.

#### 3. Full group discussion

Tell the group: Think less about specific things you observed, and more about the overall experience (ie, take a step back from the details of what you saw on your tour).

Then, ask the following, keeping each question separate:

- · What surprised you about this activity?
- · How long did it take you to "see" the first thing?
- · How did you find your perception changing as you observed?
- · What things did you notice that were not visual?
- How might you use this tool again?

#### 4. Conclusion

- Think of this as both a tool for yourself or a group that you can use. This can be a great way to start and guide your brainstorming process.
- · Placemaking can often start from observation of a place, using curiosity of what we find around us.
- Think of this also as inspiration for something that can potentially be creative placemaking into itself. What other types of tours and information to share can you fit into this type of process?
- We are performing placemaking together, creating an artwork with our attention and actions.
- You've now performed this piece, along with hundreds of other artists; you many now add it to your resume!



# Ch. 5: Leadership dimensions activity

# Leadership dimensions activity instructions

It's always helpful to know your own tendencies and default perspectives when collaborating with other people. There are many different approaches to understanding leadership styles, personality types, strengths, etc. – we find this one particularly helpful in the context of working with community and groups. It is broadly based on "Dimensions of Leadership," available at www.chambersconsult.com/inscape.html

### Advance preparation

Materials: Handout (next page), prepared chart paper, markers. 4 sheets of chart paper should be pre-labeled with each one of the 4 leadership styles at the top, and then three sections below: Advantages, Disadvantages, and In what situations is this useful?

Room prep: At lunch break, post each sheet in 4 corners of the room on writable surfaces (wall, window). Place 2-3 markers alongside the sheet. You may want to tape each sheet up onto itself so it cannot be read in advance.

### Facilitation instructions (45 min)

#### I. Introduction

This activity is about one way to think about our own leadership styles – ways that we tend to lead and approaches that come natural to us. This is not about leadership with a "big L," but rather a "small I" – there are times when we are leaders and times that we are followers, and even both at the same time.

#### 2. 4 main styles review (15 min)

So what kind of leader are you? What drives you, what do you pay most attention to, what do you do? Here's one useful way to think about it (distribute handout):

Start with Focus on Character, and going clockwise. Rather than read list, describe and add some personal thoughts, particularly identifying roles and individuals we whom we might associate with the 4 styles (such as Character – religious leaders, or Analysis - filmmakers).

#### Ask:

- Who are some examples of leaders? Where and why might they fit in one category? Leaders might be local/neighborhood-level to political.
- Is there one style that resonates strongly for you? If so, please stand up and move to chart paper with that dimension. Unfold chart paper if you had folded it. Give people a minute to sort themselves out.
- If more than one resonates (not unusual), pick the one where there are fewer people part of the goal is to have at least a few of you in each group.



# Ch. 5: Leadership dimensions activity (continued)

• If you went to one area immediately, without hesitation – tell us why you selected that way. Ask this of a few people in different categories.

# 3. Small group discussion (15 min)

Instruct the small groups to FIRST introducing themselves to one another, then discuss and take notes on:

- Advantages
- Disadvantages
- In what situations is this (style of leadership) most useful?

# 4. Report back/full group discussion (10 min)

Have someone from each group report back to the whole. Ask them to summarize (not read their list) advantages and disadvantages and review all the ideas in the final question.

### Ask of whole group:

- What happens if the people in the Interaction group plan and run a meeting?
- What about if the people in Accomplishment do it?
- What are some things you can do to address all these styles in one meeting? Share ideas (hopefully generated by participants) such as: sending out an agenda in advance, reviewing agenda at beginning of meeting, have a decision or problem to be solved, having nametags and doing introductions, having food, starting meeting with a "why we are here" statement, keeping time, breaking into small groups so everyone has a chance to meet someone and talk, etc.
- Who can help you with this?
   Acknowledge that we're not all good at all of these, nor need to be but by knowing yourself, you can ask others for assistance and/or deliberately work on areas with which you're less comfortable.
- Also cover the following at some point:
  - There is no right/wrong style, and most of us have elements of all 4 styles.
  - Effective community leaders are able to shift focus as situations and needs change.
  - It is good to understand the different styles b/c in any group of people team, community meeting, etc you will encounter every style. How can you help make everyone feel like they are supported and something is happening?
  - You might have a tendency to work in one style in one role, such as at home, or at work, and a different one when you're wearing a different hat. A common difference is in your home life, if you're a parent, versus what your job demands of you.



# Ch. 5: Leadership dimensions activity (handout)

# Leadership Styles:

# Focus on Character or "The Extraordinary Individual"

#### Someone who:

- · Has strong personal values and beliefs.
- · Is trustworthy.
- · Has integrity.
- · Is conscience-driven.
- Leads through honesty and personal responsibility.
- Is committed to actions based on shared values.
- · Persues objectives with passion and optimism.

# Focus on Analysis or "The Big Picture"

#### Someone who:

- Has reliable intuition.
- · Has creative ideas.
- · Has better judgement than most people.
- Has a well-defined vision.
- Perceives the big picture and alternative possibilities.
- Sees risks and opportunities.
- Anticipates consequences.
- Acts with courage & confidence in the face of challenges.

# Focus on Accomplishment or "Task Oriented"

#### Someone who:

- · Responds to external concerns.
- Solves problems.
- · Is results-driven.
- Gets results by overcoming barriers.
- Takes an uncompromising approach.
- Follows through to completion.
- Achieves result by getting others to work together.

# Focus on Interaction or "How are we doing?"

#### Someone who:

- Is concerned with the needs and wants of others.
- Closely monitors how others feel.
- · Is motivated by relationships.
- Inspires other to act or acts on their behalf.
- · Encourages others to excel.
- Collaborates shares responsibilities and rewards.



# Ch. 5: Team building activity

# Team building activity instructions

Since you're asking artists to work in collaboration, it's helpful to give them tools to facilitate and understand how groups and teams work. Teams don't automatically work well – they take time and intentionality.

### Advance preparation

Materials: Index cards (stack of 50+ per group of 4-6 people), straws (30-50/group) and rolls of masking tape. Assemble into sets and place on tables immediately prior to activity, or as you give instructions.

Handout: Find your own list by googling "Tuckman Team Building Stages" and find a resource that you like that shares the five stages AND includes guidance for steps that move a team through the stages to the next one. Familiarize yourself with the stages so that you will be able to present a summary and lead a discussion. Make copies to hand out after the competition portion of this activity.

### Facilitation instructions (45 min)

#### I. Introduction

As you progress on your project – many of you have or will form some version of a team or a group that works together – as distinct from activity/event participants, volunteers, supporters, etc. Some team members might be people you chose, others might be people who are interested. Good teams don't happen overnight – they are built. So, to start the discussion on this, we're first going to have a competition.

#### 2. Tower building competition (30 min)

- Have everyone count off, so that you will have groups of 4-5 people and not more than 6. Have them remain in place while you explain their task.
- Your group's mission is to build the tallest freestanding structure possible from the materials provided. (Show the index cards, straws and tape.) It will be judged on two criteria height and freestanding (ie not attached to anything like table/floor). You will have 10 minutes to plan, and 10 minutes to build. During planning, you may NOT touch the materials or you will be instantly disqualified!!
- Tell each group number where to go, ask them to introduce themselves to one another, and start the timer for 10 minutes. Make sure they do not touch the materials.
- As they plan, hover around a few groups and observe them how they make decisions, if someone's taking the lead, how that was decided, and other dynamics.
- After 10 minutes, tell them they may begin building. Again, observe dynamics, roles, how they deal with missteps.



# Ch. 5: Team building activity (continued)

- Give them a 2 minute warning, 30 second warning, and then count down from 10 seconds. Make sure everyone stops touching their tower when you get to zero. There likely will be a bit of mayhem.
- Let everyone settle down, remaining in their teams. Make a bit of a show about judging often a tower falls down within the first 30 seconds and then select the winner and give them a round of applause.
- Refocus the group. Ask the winning team, and then other teams:
  - · How did you feel?
  - · What was working?
  - · What didn't work as well?
  - How did you decide what the design would be (not the design itself the process of decision-making)?
  - Did someone take a lead role?
  - What were the roles?
  - · What behaviors were helpful in moving everything along?
- This is where you may insert some of your "outsider" observations, particularly where you
  observed tensions or dynamics that the group members may be reluctant to bring up. Do not
  name names but rather say you observed some behavior, and how that's not unlike "real life."

# 3. Tuckman's Stages of Team Building summary and discussion (10-15m)

Acknowledge that the competition was an artificial situation – but that it also demonstrates how people work together, plus, it was fun.

Introduce the Stages of Team Building. Share the handout, but tell everyone it is a resource for later, and you're not walking through it point by point. As you introduce the stages, make sure to cover:

- Teams take time to build.
- The personalities, positions (ie titles), roles, perspectives of the individuals in a team all impact how quickly they can move to performing. Teams of organizational staff may, for instance move through these faster because it is their job whereas community members might take longer because they come with different interests and buy-in.
- It's normal to go through these stages in particular, the storming stage can be scary for conflict-averse people who may think "nothing is working" and may want to walk away.
- There are distinct steps to take in each stage to make a smooth transition to the next stage.
- Entrance & exit of people may disrupt stages as well.
- Don't forget to celebrate the accomplishments of your team!

#### Discussion

- Are you or have you worked in a team or group?
- Do you recognize any of these stages?
- · How is this information useful to you?



# Ch. 5: Active listening activity

# Active listening activity instructions

This exercise reminds us the importance of slowing down and how to listen carefully.

# Advance preparation

Materials: Handout (see next page). Note that the prompts to consider asking are catered to a neighborhood/local business context – you many want to modify these to suit your circumstances.

#### Facilitation instructions (30 minutes)

#### I. Introduction

In our day to day lives, we often don't take the time to slow down and listen – in the same way that we don't slow down to look at what's around us. For this exercise, we'll practice listening carefully for another person's passions. It's common for us to jump in and interrupt people when they talk – we want to show that we have common experiences ("oh, yeah, I went there once too and I had the best time because....") – but in this exercise, hold off on your comments and just keep listening.

### 2. Active listening review (5 min)

Distribute handout and review (don't read it line for line!).

### 3. Activity instructions (15 min)

Ask people to find a person with whom they haven't spoken with much. They should select one person as the "listener" and the other as the "talker." The pair should take 7 minutes for one person to be the listener (who does also have to ask questions to keep the conversation going) and the other the talker. After 7 minutes, you will give them a warning to switch roles. Emphasize the importance of staying in their role and not hogging time.

Depending on your space scenario, you may want to suggest pairs go to different corners of the room, outside, etc. to find a quieter nook.

#### 4. Discuss (5-10 min)

After everyone has experienced both roles, bring the group back together for a debrief, asking:

- How did that feel when you were the listener?
- · How did that feel when you were the talker?
- Did it feel easy or hard? Why or why not?

Inevitably someone will say it felt unnatural. That's correct – the exercise is deliberately controlled – of course in a regular setting with a stranger (who might be a potential project collaborator), as the listener, you would want to share a little more of yourself, and you would expect that they might have questions for you to answer as well. The point is to be intentional and conscientious that you leave space for listening.



# Ch. 5: Active listening activity (handout)

#### One-to-one conversations

Are..."one organized spirit going after another person's spirit for connection, confrontation, and exchange of talent and energy." – Edward Chambers

# The purpose

### 1) Build Relationships

When people are in a relationship they can share, plan dream, create and get things done, even if they do not agree about everything or share all of the same priorities.

### 2) Uncover Self Interests

Self interests are the things that a person feels most strongly about. People are driven by their passions – not yours. People are most likely to stay with an activity, action, or project if it taps into and satisfies their interests.

#### 3) Develop Clarity

One-to-one visits allow people to express their feelings about things. When they talk about something, it helps to make that thing clearer to them.

### 4) Gather Information

Finally, a conversation is an opportunity to gather information and learn about something new – whether an individual, a business, an organization, a group.

### Conducting a one-to-one conversation

Be curious, look to draw the person out, and enjoy the experience. You may want to start with easier questions about their work or perspective on the area, and then move into deeper questions.

#### Some questions to consider asking:

- What do you do, for how long, how did you get into it?
- What is your history and experience in this neighborhood?
- What do you like about this area? How has it changed?
- What are your ideas for a stronger neighborhood/business/organization?
- What are you passionate about? What are your dreams?
- What are you good at? What do you enjoy doing?
- What is important to you?
- What groups, activities, associations are you involved in?
- What are you curious about? What do you hope to experience or learn someday?
- What would you love to share with or teach others?



# Ch. 5: Next steps worksheet

This is for participants to work on during the workshop and KEEP for themselves. Format as 2 pages to provide ample space for handwritten responses. If you have a reason to want a copy, ask to take a photograph if there isn't a copier on site.

(Format to two pages with space for response)
<program logo="" name="" project="">     Next Steps Worksheet     Name:</program>
I. What ideas and interests are you thinking about? This could be from what you explored and discussed today, and/or what you bring and continue to think about. This is a brainstorm of what is resonating with you – write it all down!
2. If you have many ideas in #1, select one or two that are your "first" interests for the moment and put a star by them, and then focus on those for the following questions.
3. Optional - If you are requiring the artist to find a collaborator:  Are there businesses/orgs/collaborator categories> that you are interested in approaching? It might be <examples as="" community="" grocery="" group="" store,="" such="">. List them here.</examples>
If you aren't sure who you might approach, what will you do to learn more?
4. Are there any other specific individuals with whom you might want to talk?
5. Optional - If relevant: How will you introduce yourself to potential collaborators? What's your "elevator speech"?
6. After today, what are your next steps?
WHAT (be specific)  BYWHEN?



**Ch.5:** Workshop evalution form

Even if you're only running one workshop, having participants fill out an evaluation form will give you a sense of what people learned, appreciated, and could be improved. If you're doing multiple workshops, the evaluation helps you gauge the value of the different components. Read the comments immediately after the workshop before you forget details.

(Format to one page with space for response.)
<program name=""> Workshop Evaluation - Date</program>
I. When you came in this morning, what were your expectations?
2. What were elements or activities in the workshop that worked well for you?
3. What could have been improved or done differently?
4. Any other thoughts or ideas to share?
Thank you for your comments! We use them!



# Ch. 5: Study hall and peer feedback activity

# Study Hall and peer feedback instructions

Use these guidelines to help artists discuss project proposals effectively.

# Advance preparation

Materials: Handout (see next page).

**Room set up:** You will start in a group to give instructions, and then send artists off in pairs. We start around a large table and have extra chairs scattered about the room.

#### **Facilitation Instructions**

- Begin by asking people to introduce themselves and give a brief description of their project.
- After confirming each proposed project meets your basic criteria, explain to study hall attendees that you will pair them to share feedback with one another.
- Following the handout, review the steps and the feedback tips.
- Pair artists with artists who are not working on the same project. Each artist should have a copy of their draft proposal to share.
- It usually takes 15-30 minutes for each proposal. Let the timing be loose, and you may want to circulate amongst pairs to see how they are doing or if they had any questions.
- Pairs will finish at different times check in with them for any last questions or thoughts, and then send them on their way.



# Ch. 5: Study hall and peer feedback activity (handout)

(Format to two pages)

#### Peer Feedback Guidelines

Peer feedback is a process of sharing information, asking clarifying questions, gaining insight, and offering ideas and suggestions. For the feedback giver – you are helping clarify and strengthen the work of another artist (your peer). As the receiver of feedback, you are better able to explain your work and gain new ideas that you may not have thought of on your own.

#### Peer Feedback Steps

When you and your artist peer are ready:

- I. Introduce yourselves to one another.
- 2. Decide who is receiving feedback (the "Artist") and who is giving it (the "Peer").
- 3. For each artist:
  - a. Artist explains proposal summary of each section is fine, with written proposal to refer to (or you may decide Peer should read it).
  - b. If Artist would like feedback on specific areas, they may say that.
  - c. Peer asks clarifying questions and listens to answers.
  - d. Peer shares positive feedback.
  - e. Peer shares constructive feedback in the form of ideas, suggestions and questions.
  - f. Artist asks for clarification if necessary.
  - g. Artist thanks Peer!
- 4. Reverse roles.
- 5. When you're done, let program staff know.

#### **Constructive Feedback**

#### Giving constructive feedback:

- · Reinforce the positive where possible give positive feedback first and last.
- · Give constructive feedback only about things that can be changed.
- · Be descriptive, not evaluative.
- Use an "I" statement ("I did not understand..." versus "This makes no sense...")
- Talk about specifics and give examples where possible.
- Where feedback is negative suggest alternatives where appropriate. Ask yourself "Why am I giving this feedback? For me? Or to help the person concerned?"
- · Remember feedback says at least as much about the giver as the receiver.

#### Receiving feedback:

- · Listen to feedback.
- Assume that feedback is constructive.
- Accept negative and positive feedback positively for consideration, rather than dismissively for your protection.
- · Ask for suggestions of ways to make modifications or changes.
- Use and consider only those elements that are constructive, and consider them carefully.
- Pause and think before responding.
- Ask to repeat if you haven't heard clearly.
- Ask for clarification or examples if statements are unclear or unsupported.
- Respect the person giving feedback, and thank them.



# Ch. 6: Project collaborator survey

Interview the project collaborators about their experiences with the artist projects. Use the survey in person or over the phone - it is not intended for the collaborator to take themselves. This gives you an opportunity to ask more nuanced questions and build rapport. Set up an excel file for entering responses so that you can tabulate and compare them more easily.

<program name=""></program>		
Collaborator Survey		
<ul> <li>Instructions for interviewer:</li> <li>Surveys to be conducted verbally in-person or by phone.</li> <li>Write notes into the survey spreadsheet.</li> <li>Prepare by reviewing project summary beore contacting collaborator</li> <li>Depending on collaborator type and the project itself, slightly different versions of the same questions below will be asked.</li> </ul>		
<ul> <li>Goals for this survey are to learn:</li> <li>Are collaborators satisfied with their experience?</li> <li>Other information related to program goals&gt;</li> <li>Has community collaborator perception of art and artists changed?</li> </ul>		
Introduction after finding right person to speak with:		
Hello, I'm, working for <organization> and the <program name="">. Recently, artist(s) <names> worked with you on a project <title>. Do you have 5 minutes to take a survey that will help us improve the program&lt;/td&gt;&lt;/tr&gt;&lt;tr&gt;&lt;td&gt;If this is not a good time, when could I call you back? (If for some reason they sound like they'd be more likely to answer if someone showed up in person, find out when they're most likely to be available and say we will try to send someone over but you will confirm it with them – giving you time to see if you &lt;or other project coordinator&gt; can stop by.)&lt;/td&gt;&lt;/tr&gt;&lt;tr&gt;&lt;td&gt;Great. I'll start the survey questions now.&lt;/td&gt;&lt;/tr&gt;&lt;tr&gt;&lt;td&gt;Survey questions:  1. Collaborator (whomever you are talking to): name, position, business/org/group  2. How was this project valuable to your &lt;business/org/group&gt;?  Check all that apply.  If a business:  o Exposure to new customers/clients? Y/N  o If yes - Approximately how many? o Sales revenue increased?&lt;/td&gt;&lt;/tr&gt;&lt;/tbody&gt;&lt;/table&gt;</title></names></program></organization>		



amount, etc.)

o Other? (specify) \_\_\_

o If yes - By how much? (compare equivalent night/timeframe/season, percent, actual

o Community buzz/attention (news articles, online, word-of-mouth, etc.)

# Ch. 6: Project collaborator survey (continued)

• Anything else of note to think about or pursue?

If a non-profit or community group:
o Exposure to new participants/clients? Y/N
o If yes - Approximately how many?
o If org/group sells anything
o Sales revenue increased? Y/N
o If yes - By how much? (compare equivalent timeframe/season, percent or actual
amount)?
o Community buzz/attention (news articles, online, word-of-mouth, etc.)? Y/N
o Further the goals of your organization/group's mission? Y/N
o Existing/regular participants/clients enjoyed it? Y/N
o Project makes place/org/group stand out? Y/N
o Other? (specify)
3. How do you feel about this project? (If they have offered many thoughts in the "other"
section above, acknowledge that, and ask if they have any addition feelings about project.)
4. Previous to this experience/project with a <program name=""> Artist, had your <business <="" org="" th=""></business></program>
group> worked with an artist? Y/N
5. Are you more or less likely to work with artists after this experience? More/less.
If more –
<ul> <li>Please describe what you might seek an artist for?</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Would you pay for this type of service for your <business group="" org="">?Y/N</business></li> </ul>
<ul> <li>If you wanted to work with an artist again, do you know how to find one? Y/N</li> </ul>
If less -
• Why?
6. After this, has your understanding or view of what art and artists do changed? How?
7. Thank you for taking the time to share your answers. If we have additional questions in the
future, may we contact you again? Y/N
Survey taker observations:
• Is person & story interesting, potentially worth capturing more of the story?
Would person be inclined share more details?



# Front cover images (clockwise from top left):

#### Paddlewheel-Peoplewheel

Artists Steve Bougie and Richard Fuller created a stained glass piece installation in a chain link fence.

Photo by Peter Haakon Thompson

#### Map the Ave

Sam Carlsen painted a neighborhood map on a parking lot that participants used to locate themselves in relation to Hamline Station.

Photo by Sam Carlsen

#### Bangkok Thai Mural

Troy King, Emily Stover and Mike Fitzsimmons stenciled a mural of King Rama V and other decorative elements for Bangkok Thai Restaurant. Photo by Peter Haakon Thompson

#### Aristophanes' 'The Frogs'

Inspired by their Frogtown Neighborhood surroundings, artists Luke Weber, Jennifer Harrington, and Cassia Rose Harder (The Gonzo Group Theatre) put on a production of a Greek comedy in a parking lot.

Photo by Peter Haakon Thompson

#### Table during Irrigate Placemaking Workshop

Photo by Irrigate

#### Relight the Victoria

Artist Nick Clausen filmed the Iny Asian Dance Theater performing traditional dances and then projected the video on the windows of the vacant Victoria Theater along University Avenue.

Photo by Irrigate

# Page 8 images (clockwise from top left):

#### Midway on My Mind

A Poetic Walking tour by punk poet Paul Dickinson and historian Aleah Vinick about gentrification and car culture on University, with a few historical details along the way to support and enhance Paul's stories.

Photo by Alex Roob

#### Color Constellation

Artist Tara Fahey worked with Cycles for Change to engage youth in painting and collaging on trapezoidal plywood pieces, using something that was inspiring to them as a starting point for the images they created. Photo by the Tara Fahey

#### Gordon Parks Neighborhood Postal Service

The GPNPS worked with faculty and students at Gordon Parks High School to create a neighborhood postal service with the goal of bringing people in the neighborhood together through handwritten postcards. Photo by Alex Roob

#### Art Heals the Soul

Artist Kao Lee Thao painted live and allowed the community to be a part of her artwork. There were supply of acrylic paints, paint brushes and a large blank canvas. Artist Elisabeth Thao provided individual sit down, 7-minute conversations with food, exploring life, love, spirituality and joy.

Photo by Anita Sadler

#### Habby Cabaret

Happy Cabaret artists used their variety show to attract new audiences to the grand re-opening of Lao Family Thai Restaurant. Photo by Alex Roob

#### Social Mobility

In collaboration with nonprofit organizations Catholic Charities and College Possible, artists Jade Hoyer and Ali Parsons facilitated workshops on placemaking and art and activism for youth participants in the College Possible program.

Photo by the artists

#### Seton Center Mural

Kathy Mellin Grubbs, a mosaic muralist, led participants through the creative process of bringing a mural into being at the intersection of University Avenue and Syndicate Avenue.

Photo by Kathy Mellin Grubbs

## Cornbread and Friends

Artist Arminta Wilson interviewed local music luminary, Cornbread Harris, about the father of Minnesota rock and roll, Augie Garcia. The interview was an event at Homi Mexican Restaurant and was taped for later broadcast on cable access.

Photo by Alan Skamser-O'Neil



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